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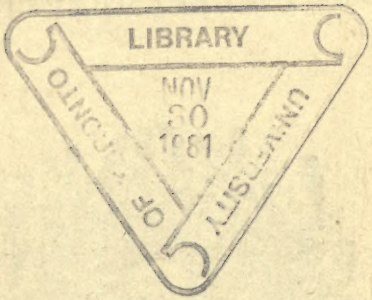

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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCLXI. JULY 1912. Vol. CXCII.

DR PENNELL OF BANNU.

BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL G. K. SCOTT-MONCRIEFF, C.B., C.I.E.

In 'The Times' of March 25, there appeared in the obituary column a brief but appreciative account of the work of Dr Theodore Leighton Pennell, a medical missionary at Bannu, N.W. Frontier of India, calling special attention to his brilliant career as a medical student some twenty years ago, and to the ascendancy he had gained by his skill in his profession among the people of India.

It is probable that among the readers of 'The Times' not one in a hundred had ever heard of him before, and it may therefore be permitted for one who was in no way connected with him as a missionary, but who, as a frontier official, met him frequently and knew the country and the people among whom he laboured, to add a tribute of respect to the memory of perhaps the most remarkable Englishman who ever came into touch with the fierce and fanatical tribes of the Afghan border.

This is a strong statement, for there have been many Englishmen in that adventurous land who have left their mark. Herbert Edwardes, of Multan fame, and John Nicholson, hero of Delhi, are still remembered and honoured by the Border tribesmen. Yet it may be remembered that these great men owed some of their influence to the fact that they were the accredited agents of the great British Government, and, although it does not detract in any way from the splendid work they did, it is certain that this fact gave them an initial force which they would be the first to acknowledge. Pennell stood alone. He came among them as a stranger, he was representative of a creed which is uncompromisingly hostile to much of their cherished customs, and he made no secret of the fact.

Yet, when the end came, it was probably true (as the principal Anglo-Indian newspaper of the Punjab wrote) that in many a Pathan homestead the evening meal would be untouched when it was heard that the famous Doctor Sahib at Bannu was no more. From the hills and valleys, far and near, multitudes came to gaze for the last time on the features of their friend, as he slept his last sleep, lying in his coffin, dressed in the Afghan dress, as they had known him. Many of the wild hillmen sobbed and lamented that they would never see him again, and when his mortal remains were carried to the grave, borne by British officers—the general commanding the troops among them—alternately with the boys from Pennell's school, the route was lined with crowds of Pathan warriors, their mutual feuds and quarrels forgotten, that they might render a tribute of honour to the Englishman who had trusted them and given them freely of his best.

Who was this man, and what sort of people were they? To answer this question it is necessary to say something about Bannu and its surrounding people.

Nowadays India is, thanks to modern facilities of travel, so much a winter resort for people at home who have leisure and means to escape a British climate, that it is almost an insult to describe any special place of interest in that country. Bannu, however, is outside the beaten track. The cold-weather tourist does not find his way there, for it is very remote. To Peshawar, 120 miles farther north, tourists come freely. They admire the beauty of its gardens, the picturesque costume of its people, perhaps they make an expedition, with proper escort, up the Khyber, and are impressed by the stern wildness of the mountains and the practical need for defences as evinced by the forts and blockhouses at Ali Musjid and Jamrud. They see a little of frontier life, so different in every respect from the ordinary scenes of India, and possibly they realise that there at least war is never far off, and that the rule of the Emperor is necessarily supported by the sword. But not one visitor in a thousand goes southward to the other outposts of British India. If they did, they would find at Bannu another beautiful valley, another girdle of stony but wildly picturesque mountains, fresh tribes, men armed to the teeth, of the same intractable and indomitable nature as the Afridis and the Mohmands.

One who knew Bannu well has thus described it: "In spring it is a vegetable emerald, and in winter its many-coloured harvests look as if Ceres had stumbled against the great Salt Range (to the north and east) and spilt half her cornucopia in this favoured vale. Most of the fruits of Cabul are found wild, and culture would bring them to perfection. As it is, the limes, the mulberries, and melons are delicious. Roses, too, without which Englishmen

have learnt from the East to think no scenery complete, abound in the upper part at the close of spring. Altogether Nature has so smiled on Bunnoo that the stranger thinks it a paradise."—(Sir H. Edwardes, in 'A Year on the Punjab Frontier,' published in 1850.)

The administrative district of Bannu lies between the rocky hills of Kohat (*Koh* is the Persian for mountain, and the word Kohat describes the country, which is a tangled mass of ravines and hills) and the plains of Dera Ismail Khan, which stretch between the Indus and the Suleiman Range. Bannu district is, roughly, shaped like a triangle, the apex of which points to the west, the base being along the Indus. At the apex enters the Kurram River, which, rising in the Afghan mountains south of Kabul and then traversing the Kurram Valley, touches our (former) outpost at Thal, in the Kohat district, and then plunges into a wild mountainous region for 20 miles, emerging again at Bannu, to fertilise with its waters the fruitful valley, before finally joining the main stream of the Indus. Tributaries from the mountains join the Kurram River from both sides, and each in turn helps to contribute to the possibilities of irrigation and the operations of the husbandman. Evidently from ancient times the valley was known for its fertility, for an ancient mound called Accra has yielded many coins of Græco-Bactrian origin, precious stones, and domestic utensils, telling of the days when Alexander the Great colonised this part of the world with those who brought with them Western art.

As regards the people, Sir H. Edwardes writes: "The Bunnoochees are bad specimens of Afghans. Could worse be said of any human race? They have all the vices of the Pathans rankly luxuriant, the virtues stunted. The introduction of Indian cultivators from the Punjab, and the settlement of numerous low Hindoos in the valley, have contributed by intermarrying, slave-dealing, and vice, to complete the mongrel character of the Bunnoo people."

So much for the inhabitants of the valley. The mountains both to the north-west and south-west of the triangle are inhabited mainly by the great clan of Waziris, divided into two main sections, the Darwesh Khels to the north and the Mahsuds to the south, these again subdivided into numerous septs, all of common origin and usually bitterly hostile to each other. There is nothing mongrel about *their* character or origin. They are frankly and typically robbers,—brave, hardy, resolute men, but cruel, merciless, and savage.

I think it was Mr Archibald Forbes, the eminent war-correspondent, who said that if men were a little lower than the angels, the lowest and farthest place from angelic status would be taken by the Pathans. This may be a little hard on the race, who probably are much the same as highland

robbers in most parts of the world, especially in countries where the creed of the warrior gives a certain sanction to highway robbery; but in any case most Pathans would agree that of all the tribes or sections of their countrymen, the lowest place, in respect of sheer devilry, would be taken by the Waziris in general, and the Mahsuds in particular.

Such was the place and such were the people among whom Theodore Pennell worked, and on whom his personality exercised such a fascination. He, however, was not the first Englishman to influence these people, and before dwelling more particularly on him it is necessary to say something about others.

It was in 1847 that an Englishman first entered on the scene. The first Sikh war had ended in the British Government taking over the charge of the Sikh kingdom of the Punjab, administering it in the name of the infant Maharajah Dhuleep Singh, and in place of the corrupt factions that had intrigued and quarrelled at Lahore. The English Resident at Lahore was the great Sir Henry Lawrence, and among the brilliant band of active, resolute men that formed his staff was a young subaltern of infantry named Herbert Edwardes. Lawrence had already marked the character and capacity of his young staff-officer. And so when the question of the long-standing arrears of revenue owed by the Bannu subjects of the Sikhs came to be considered, he selected Edwardes to go to the valley and there make a financial settlement, amicably if possible —a fairly formidable task for a British subaltern, or indeed for any one, considering that the tribesmen had for twenty-five years successfully defied Runjeet Singh, "The Lion of the Punjab," as he was called.

Edwardes had with him 500 men and two troops of horse artillery. With this little force, and practically without firing a shot, he not only induced the people to pay their tribute, but succeeded in making them raze to the ground their fortified posts, of which there were four hundred in the valley, and he got them to unite together in building a large fort at a commanding position, close to the place where the Kurram River debouches, and where therefore the head works of irrigation can be controlled. This fort still remains, it is the nucleus of the modern cantonment of Bannu (long called Edwardesabad), and it commands the road which leads from the valley to the Tochi Pass, a great trade route into the heart of Afghanistan.

How Edwardes accomplished this marvellous task in a year; how he won this bloodless victory by personal influence alone; how he was suddenly called thence by an urgent message from the wounded Vans Agnew at Multan; how he raised an army of mountaineers and, marching in the hottest of weather, proceeded at once to Multan, and, though too late to save Vans Agnew, defeated the Sikh host,

—is related in his book, 'A Year on the Punjab Frontier.' It is foreign to our present purpose to do more here than merely allude to it, showing as it does the power of a high-souled Englishman to rule even the wild tribesmen of the Afghan border. His was somewhat of the same fearless character that afterwards was the secret of Pennell's influence.

After Edwardes came John Nicholson, who ruled with justice, swift severity, tremendous energy. Old greybeards to-day point with admiration to the tree under which he sat and administered righteous rule without partiality, favour, or affection. They tell how "his horse was everywhere." They never knew when he was coming or where he was going; but they did know that when he came the poor rejoiced and the guilty suffered.

It might be thought that, however right and expedient it might be to introduce law and order among a fierce and fanatical race of Moslems, yet the time could not come for many years when it would be safe to introduce the teaching of Christianity. Such, indeed, was the view of some of the earlier British rulers on the Frontier, as it has been in our own day in the Sudan—at all events, until quite recently. Such, however, was not the view of Sir H. Edwardes. At a meeting held at Peshawar in 1853, he—being then Commissioner of the District—not only encouraged the idea, but expressed himself on the subject in wise and eloquent terms, commending the establishment of a mission there independent of Government aid, but recognised and protected by the State as impartially as if it were a Hindu or Mohammedan establishment. To quote all he said would be impossible, but one paragraph alone may be taken as the keynote of the rest: "Sad instances of fanaticism have occurred under our eyes, and it might be feared, perhaps in human judgment, that greater opposition would meet us here than elsewhere. But I do not anticipate it. The gospel of peace will bear its own fruit and justify its name. Experience, too, teaches us not to fear."

History has shown that in taking this step Edwardes was not alienating the respect of the Pathans. A few years after these words were spoken the Indian Mutiny broke out. The Punjab saved India. Peshawar was the key to the Punjab. Edwardes at Peshawar held N.W. India for the Empire, and the Pathans were true to him.

So Christian Missions were established on the Frontier. Gradually it has come to be recognised that healing of the body is the surest way to win the trust of the Pathan, and a chain of medical missions has been established all along the Afghan frontier. Bannu was one of the last so to be established, and it was to Pennell that the task was confided.

There had been clerical missionaries there some years before. I did not know any of these personally. I believe they did good work in connection with translation, but this work did not interest the Pathan, who, as far as preaching was concerned, had plenty from his own mullahs, and was in no mood to have his cherished ideas disputed. So, when Pennell began to preach in the Bannu bazaar he soon found this out, being hustled, kicked, and buffeted in no gentle fashion. However, he came up smiling and went on with his work in the hospital, extracting bullets and sewing up sword-cuts with perfect friendliness.

Gradually the tribesmen on both sides of the border-line began to realise that there was among them a man of no ordinary skill, who, although he might have the most heterodox notions on the subject of religion, was at all events a most wonderful healer of disease. Moreover, he spoke their language admirably, wore the same dress as they did, and was always ready to go anywhere, even into the most dangerous places. This was evidently a person to be encouraged. What if the mullahs do rail against him? At all events he, too, is a "man of the Book" and no idolater, and his medicines, whatever their taste may be, are more efficacious than the mullah's charms. So they made friends with Pennell and invited him to all sorts of queer places. After he had been at Bannu a few years he was invited to attend the chief of a tribe that had given the Government not long before much trouble. The healing art was successfully applied, and the chief became a firm friend of the doctor. Very shortly afterwards the whole frontier, from the Malakand to the Tochi, was blazing with war. Punitive columns advanced, as we know, from every cantonment. Fierce fighting was going on everywhere — mullahs preaching a *jehád* in every direction. Scarcely any of the tribes remained quiet, but one whole section which did hold aloof was that with whose chief Pennell had made friends.

I met him at Bannu for the first time in 1901. It was a somewhat special occasion. The Mahsuds had been long filling the cup of their misdeeds to overflowing, and were therefore being subject to a blockade — a sort of boycotting on a large scale, whereby the tribe was supposed to be prevented from holding any intercourse with its neighbours. It was not supposed to be a campaign—that is to say, it was not an officially declared war, there were no special troops mobilised nor staff appointed. But in other respects—*i.e.*, in matters of bloodshed and destruction—it was war. One of my survey parties (I was head of the engineering branch) had been cut up almost to a man, and the bill of casualties otherwise amounted to a considerable figure. So to accelerate matters two mobile columns had

been sent in to bring coercive measures to bear on the tribe, one from the south under the general commanding, the other from the north commanded by Colonel Tonnachy, of one of the Sikh regiments in the Frontier Force. Both had done their work successfully, and Colonel Tonnachy had been awarded a C.B.—somewhat to our surprise, for though he richly deserved it, few honours were being awarded for the operations. Bannu was the base of the operations of the north column, and on the return from this raid we were all gathered in the Frontier Force mess for a special dinner to be given in honour of the newly appointed Chief Commissioner of the Province (Colonel Sir Harold Deane), who in former days had been in a frontier cavalry regiment. Among the soldiers and political officers gathered in the ante-room before dinner there was one striking figure in ordinary evening dress, who was evidently not a military or civil officer—a tall, spare man, with a short beard, and gold-rimmed spectacles, whom Colonel Tonnochy introduced to me as Dr Pennell.

I sat beside him at dinner. He was, at first, shy, reserved, and even taciturn, until I began to speak about Pathans. Then he told me many interesting and humorous things. No doubt they were great rascals, but probably I had found that they had excellent points. The great pity about them was that they were so embroiled in blood feuds that they were exterminating each other, killing off the best and bravest. Of course, with the frontier so close on two sides (it is within three miles), murder could easily be committed in British territory and the culprit escape comfortably outside. The trans-border region was simply full of these outlaws, and it was impossible to ignore them, but it made matters exciting for their next-of-kin inside our territory. Would I come and see his hospital? The wards were generally full, and some of the patients came from long distances. And the school? Yes, there was a school. He had not intended to be a schoolmaster, but it was hopeless to do much with the old material. They came to be treated in his hospital, and they were very good friends with him; but they were not much influenced by his teaching, whereas the boys were different. They were such jolly boys, too, so plucky and manly. Yes, there were all sorts, Hindus and Sikhs, as well as Pathans. The mullahs did object a bit, but they had not stopped many coming. Yes, they learned the Bible and Christian hymns, and a few were Christians, but not very many.

So passed the evening pleasantly. We toasted the new Chief Commissioner, and Tonnochy and Down, the Political Officer. Alas! only a few weeks later Down was killed in action, fighting with Mahsuds; and less than a year afterwards Tonnochy, too, was brought in

to Bannu, mortally wounded, to be tended by Pennell with every care that surgery could devise, but he was beyond all human aid.

From him, however, I learned much about Pennell. He was working at Bannu entirely at his own expense. He was one of the most distinguished medical students of his year, a gold medallist of London University in science, in surgery, in medicine, and he had come to Bannu, accompanied by his mother, an old lady of great learning and character. He was her only child, and she had accompanied him to India when he first came out. Elderly English ladies in that country are "like angel-visits, few and far between," and the few that are in the country usually live in some pleasant hill-station. Mrs Pennell, I believe, never left the Frontier once from the time she arrived there with her son till her death, a period of some sixteen years. His attention and devotion to her was one of the many remarkable traits in his character.

The courage of the man, too, was beginning to attract attention in a country where physical bravery is no uncommon virtue. To give one instance, I was told that he had gone alone and unarmed into a mountain village at night to rescue one of his adherents. This lad had become a Christian, to the wrath of his relatives; but as the man was of full age they could not legally remove him from the doctor's influence, though they tried "peaceful persuasion" to the fullest extent in their power. Unsuccessful in this, they managed to force him one afternoon to come out with them, and hurried him off to their mountain home some miles away. The doctor came in late in the evening to find the lad had disappeared. Knowing that if he once allowed him to go, the result would be either death or recantation, the doctor started at once on his bicycle in the direction of the lad's home, in the hope that he might overtake the party, and, if possible, recall the young man. But night came on, and the doctor had to leave his bicycle and take to devious mountain tracks. Long after midnight he reached the village; it was a hot, moonlight night, and he could see three sheeted forms asleep near one of the houses, in the open air. He gently wakened the centre sleeper, who turned out to be the lad he was seeking, and the two quietly returned to Bannu. But if he had awakened the wrong man, or if either of the others, who were sleeping the sleep of the weary, had been disturbed, Pennell's life would not have been worth a minute's purchase, and he knew it.

I had often to go to Bannu after this on duty, and I saw the doctor frequently. I accepted his invitation to see the hospital. One must not imagine a splendid palace, such as many of our European hospitals are, with spotless wards, polished floors, snowy sheets, and admirable nurses. The buildings were simply rows of plain-built mud-walled

houses, with a verandah along one side, and flat roofs, the whole rather better than native dwellings, but with no greater degree of interior luxury than native string-beds and cotton quilts. On these were lying many poor people in various stages of disease, and from many places. There were Sikhs and Hindus, but the majority were Pathans. With one of the latter, who seemed convalescent and inclined to be conversational, I had some talk in Pushto. After the usual compliments, I asked him where he came from. "From Ghazni" (about 200 miles off). "That is a long way. Was not the journey very trying?" "Certainly it was, but it was well worth it."

"Would it not have been easier for you to go to Kabul?"

"Yes, an easier journey; but it would have been of little use. There is a *Farangi hakim* [European physician] in Kabul, but he is busy, and it is not always possible to be attended by him. So the advice of my friends was to come here, and I did. Now I am well, the doctor here is kind and skilful."

"I suppose you will tell that to your friends?"

"Oh, yes, but they know it already; the doctor's fame is well known."

Far into the interior of Afghanistan it had thus come to be known that at Bannu there was a *Farangi hakim*, who was not only a man of skill, but "a man of the Book," who healed men "in the name of Allah, most merciful and compassionate" (words at the beginning of every Moslem book).

Pennell himself took these hill men very much as he found them, and often humorous stories were told of the conversations they had together. One cannot doubt that, coming in contact with many wounded men in hospital, he must have been the recipient of some atrocious confidences, and some of the stories he told were flavoured with some grim jest. As a sample of these, he told how one day a man came with a gun-shot wound, which he was very anxious to get cured as soon as possible, so that he might settle accounts with the perpetrator, who was his own uncle. "I suppose," said the doctor, "that we shall soon have the uncle here, then?" "No fear," was the reply; "I am a better shot than he is!"

To try and convince such men as these of their moral obliquity seemed impossible, so although the doctor did his best not only to heal them, but also to show them the beauty of the Gospel, his chief hope for the future and his great pleasure lay with the boys.

His school at first was a very small affair, but by the time I came into touch with him it had flourished so far that it was just being established on the public school boarding system, and a block of dormitories and class-rooms had then been completed. Close to this building was a fine swimming-tank, over

which there was a big tree, on which were erected diving platforms at various heights. Every morning, even in the sharp cold winter, the boys all had to swim, the doctor himself often leading them; and if any lad shirked it, he was thrown in, clothes and all. The elder boys had quite imbibed the spirit of public school *esprit de corps*, and were of the greatest value in enforcing a code of good form and honour. They all adored the doctor, and his greatest pleasure in life was in his association with them, playing football and cricket with the utmost keenness.

The school team soon won challenge prizes for the schools of the whole province, and the doctor one year took them a wonderful tour, all over India, playing schools all over the country, as far south as Madras. An education in itself for the boys, who won not only a reputation as good players, but as well-behaved gentlemen. Never before had the people of India seen Afghans of this sort.

Then the indefatigable Pennell started a newspaper. I do not know in which of the many languages spoken in Bannu (there were at least four besides English) it was published, but it had apparently a fair circulation, and may have reached some to whom the editor was otherwise a stranger.

He was, however, every man's friend in the district, and his fame went far beyond it. One winter he and one of his beloved boys made an extraordinary tour over a large part of Northern India, living entirely on the hospitality of the natives, and preaching and healing, like the early apostles.

In 1908 he came home after sixteen years strenuous work. But he seems to have taken very little rest, for the greater part of his time was spent in going about England and advocating the cause of medical missions. I met him, for the last time, on one of these occasions, at the Queen's Hall in London. Two other men had spoken before him, one from the swamps of Bengal and the other from the ancient land of Mesopotamia, each telling pathetic tales of suffering humanity and inadequate resources to meet it. Then came Pennell. He strode to the front of the platform and made the hall ring with the Arabic "Kalima" or Moslem creed, in perfect imitation of the sonorous mullahs in many a mountain mosque. I do not know what else he said, for the wild chant was like the "call from the wild," making one forget London with its tame civilisation, and bringing back with ineffable force the free frontier life with its danger and fascination.

I had left India, so did not see Pennell again. But I heard of him frequently. The Government had awarded to him the medal of the Kaisar-i-Hind,—first the silver medal in 1903, and then in 1910 the gold medal. This medal is given, without reference to creed, sex, or position, to those who have

done most for the people of the country.

His work, too, extended in various directions. He opened first a dispensary, and subsequently a church, at a little out-of-the-way spot in the Salt Range, called Kharak. Later on at Thal, farthest outpost within our border at the entrance to the Kurram Valley and some twenty miles across the mountains from Bannu, he opened another centre of work. He had married a lady who, herself a medical graduate, was thoroughly in sympathy with his aims.

His popularity, too, with the people grew with succeeding years. On one occasion when he was seriously ill, prayers for his recovery were offered alike in Hindu temples and Mohammedan mosques, a token of esteem which, as far as I know, he shared in India only with Queen Victoria and King Edward.

The end came suddenly. One of the patients in his hospital, who was in a filthy state, had left a string bedstead in a condition which necessitated the removal of most of its texture. Dr Barnett, a young English assistant of Dr Pennell, in cutting this away scratched his hand. Blood-poisoning intervened, and in spite of Dr Pennell's skill the younger man passed away. The older doctor, too, must have unconsciously been affected, for he grew suddenly ill. All that medical skill could do was done, but symptoms developed with fatal rapidity, and the end came within a very few days.

Then the last scenes of all, amid the sorrow of the whole community.

His work, however finished in one sense and well done, is in another sense only begun. It is not for me to speak of his work as a missionary,—that must be left to those who are qualified to judge. But as an important part of our hold, as Englishmen, on the rule of the great Indian Empire depends on the character, not only of the official class, but of all our countrymen, it may be said that Pennell accomplished a magnificent and what to some would seem utterly impossible task of overwhelming importance. He upheld the character of the ruling race for courage and impartiality, and yet he was able to win the hearts of a fierce and turbulent people by sympathy and unselfishness of the most sublime description. The value of such men in the pacification of the Indian frontier is beyond all calculation.

THE RETURN TO NATURE.

AN ISLAND COMEDY.

BY IAN HAY.

MISS PHYLLIS ETHERINGTON, conscious of a sudden chilliness in her toes, crossly drew those extremities into a less adventurous position and endeavoured to recompose herself to slumber. But she was aware, even in the semi-stupor in which she lay, of a certain element of disturbance in her surroundings. Her pillow felt extremely hard, and the sun appeared to be streaming through her cabin skylight with unusual ferocity. Had she overslept herself, she wondered. How about breakfast? She must have lain long. Had she been called? Certainly she was beginning to feel thoroughly restless. Something rigid and unyielding was pressing against her ribs. A book, perhaps: she was in the habit of reading late in bed and dropping off to sleep, the volume under perusal usually being retrieved somewhere in the neighbourhood of the hot-water bottle in the morning. Should she make an effort now, or—the sluggard's inevitable alternative—give herself just five minutes longer?

The question was settled for her. Her toes were once again sending up signals for help, and their appeal was backed ten seconds later by a sudden splash of water, which broke over the sleeper's feet and deluged her to the knees.

Miss Etherington sat up suddenly, to realise that she had mistaken her whereabouts. It was a dream reversed. Instead of tumbling out of fairyland to wake up in bed, she had tumbled out of bed to wake up in fairyland.

She was sitting upon a sunny shore—a concave arc of shelving yellow sand, with blue and white wavelets lazily rolling up and down the declivity. One of these broke gently over her bare feet for the third time.

Woman-like, she took a lightning inventory of her costume—and gave a little gasp of dismay. Her toilet presented the appearance of having been begun in haste and not finished at all. Her long hair, dank but luxurious, flowed down to her waist. A saxe-blue serge skirt fluttered round her bare ankles. Her most adequate article of attire was a cork life-belt, fastened round her quilted dressing-gown. She was stiff and aching in every limb.

She remembered all now. The yacht—the tropical hurricane—the grinding crash in the dead of night—the trampling of feet overhead and the hoarse shouting of men—the heeling decks and flapping ropes—a

pair of hands which had hurried her along the sloping alley-ways and passed her down into a heaving cockle-shell—finally, the great green wave which had swung up out of the darkness and fallen upon them all and carried her down, down, down, until she lost consciousness. And here she was, cast up and alive upon a warm sandy beach. The life-belt was responsible for that, she supposed. She had no recollection of having put it on, though. Probably the hands which hurried her on deck had attended to that. There was a number on it: *S.Y. Island Queen, R.Y.S.—State-Room No.* 3. The number of her state-room was seven, so this could not be the belt which she had noticed rolled up in a rack above her berth, lazily wondering if she would ever need it.

Then, as her senses adjusted themselves, came the inevitable inquiry: "Where were the others? Her host, that cheerful, kindly old nobleman, was he gone? What a death for a man reputed to know the Pacific as most amateurs know the Solent! And the Arthur Denholms? And Colonel Shiell? And Margaret Alderson? And—" Miss Etherington's exquisite features hardened for a moment—"Leslie Gale?"

Then her face softened again. Death closes all accounts. Leslie Gale, lying peacefully in twenty fathoms of blue water, could never again do anything to increase or diminish the sum-total of his account with her—an account opened, run up, audited, and found incorrect in every possible way within a brief but extremely stormy period of three weeks. That vendetta was at an end, anyway.

Why had she come to dislike him so intensely? she wondered. Was it because he had asked her to marry him? Apparently not; for in that case she should at this moment be cherishing the bitterest feelings towards some seventeen other gentlemen, mostly of blameless character and antecedents, who had at various periods mooted the same proposition. Was it because he had proposed to her after an acquaintance of three days? No; one man had done so after one ball, and she had felt rather flattered. She had disliked Leslie Gale from the moment of their first meeting. He had not treated her with the respect—not to say the servility—to which she was accustomed. She objected also to the manner in which he had treated his dismissal. True, he had not behaved violently or idiotically, like most of the others. On the contrary, he had exhibited most exasperating detachment of mind about it, and had talked—no, *chatted* to her about herself in a manner which she resented very much. He had appeared almost sorry for her.

"You are in a difficult position," he said musingly, at that point in their interview at which a right-minded lover would have taken a pathetic departure. "You are a girl

with brains and character—and a bit of a spoiled child into the bargain. You cannot love a man who is your mental and moral inferior, and you are too opinionated and conceited to give into your superior. So you fall between two stools."

At this she had been unable to resist the temptation of a crushing retort.

"Are you my superior?" she rapped out.

"Yes."

Joy! He had fallen into the trap.

"Then"—maliciously—"why don't you subdue me?"

On paper, there was no answer to this question; but this bumptious young man had replied without hesitation—

"Because you won't stand your ground. You will run away."

"Why should I run away—from you?" inquired Miss Etherington icily.

"Because," replied Mr Gale, "you are afraid of me."

"Indeed?"

"Yes."

"Then you think you will subdue me?"

"No," he said frankly—"I don't. You won't give me the chance. Modern civilisation deprives man of many of his weapons. If we were shut up together on a desert island, or if we had lived in the cave-dwelling period——"

"You would have subdued me with a flint axe, I suppose," said Miss Etherington scornfully.

"No, not at all. There would have been no need. If I had wanted you I should have used the flint axe to settle the claims of your other suitors, and then picked you up and carried you off."

"It is possible," said Miss Etherington gently, "that I might not have come."

"Yes, you would. You would have come gladly, knowing that the best man had got you; and that is all a woman really cares about."

"If you honestly believe that," replied Miss Etherington almost compassionately, "all I can say is that your intelligence is even more unformed than I suspected. When you have seen a little more of the world you will realise that mankind has progressed beyond the schoolboy attitude towards life. Women are now free agents."

"Yes. And I'm not sure," remarked the experienced Mr Gale, "that there are as many happy marriages under the new system as the old. Women are notoriously bad judges of a man. I shall watch your future career with interest, Miss Etherington—interest and apprehension. In matters of the heart I mistrust your judgment."

He rose.

"Now," he said, "if you would like to have the last word you had better say it at once; because it is getting late, and the rest of the party may be wondering what you and I are discussing under the lee of the chart-house."

At this Miss Etherington had risen from her seat and sailed silently and majestically aft.

That was a fortnight ago. Since then, in the constricted

space of a yacht, friction had been inevitable. Miss Etherington at first made an attempt to avoid Mr Gale's society, but relinquished this on being taunted with "running away." So she changed her tactics, and treated Mr Gale with excessive sprightliness in public and cold disdain in private. Gale's flippant and philosophical detachment did not wear well. He maintained a careless and semi-humorous pose for about a week, and then one evening, under the baneful influence of a full round moon, suddenly crumpled up and descended to sentimental entreaty. Miss Etherington, perceiving that he had delivered himself into her hands, let him run on for nearly ten minutes, and then gave free rein to a rather exceptional talent for biting sarcasm. Gale's amorous expansiveness collapsed like a punctured balloon at the first stab; and feeling hot and foolish and being a man, he lost his temper, and said things which should not be said to a lady, however provoking.

Then followed seven days of open hostility. Finally one night, when the indefatigable Mrs Arthur Denholm organised a dance on the deck under the awning, Leslie Gale, who hated feuds, summoned his entire stock of common-sense and courage and asked Miss Etherington for a waltz.

He met with a flat refusal, for which he was fully prepared. He persisted.

"Nonsense!" he said. "Come on! Just a little turn! It will do us both good," he added meaningly.

Without further entreaty he placed an arm round Miss Etherington's slim waist, and trundled her unresisting but unresponsive form twice round the deck. Then, a little blown by the considerable exertion involved, he paused, and remarked cheerfully—

"That was splendid!"

Miss Etherington swiftly released her waist from his arm, and crossed the deck to where one Ommaney, a callow and cub-like member of the company, was lolling against a stanchion.

"Billy dear," she said, with an entrancing smile, "will you dance with me?"

Billy, much flattered, complied.

An hour later Miss Etherington, on her way to bed, found her path barred by Mr Leslie Gale, who was standing at the foot of the companion. His face was white, and his teeth chattered gently — but not with cold or fear.

"Let me pass, please," said Miss Etherington, rather nervously.

"I only wanted to say," answered Mr Gale in a voice which Miss Etherington had never heard before, "that I think you are the most ill-bred and detestable girl I have ever met. You may pass now."

That was last night — say twelve hours ago. And now Leslie Gale was dead, lying with the wreck of the yacht deep down beside the coral reef that had wrecked them. Dead! And so were the others, to all

seeming. She gazed round—at the horse-shoe curve of the little bay; at the palm-covered slopes behind her; at the boiling surge outside the bar. Was she utterly alone? She was a plucky young woman, and declined to be frightened until she was sure.

She sprang resolutely to her feet and set out inland. Not far off uprose a little hill. From the summit of this she could survey her kingdom and take an inventory of its possibilities. She was not beaten yet. Her pulse beat high. Her small bare toes resolutely crimped the sand.

Meanwhile, behind an adjacent sandhill, following the movements of his beloved with breathless interest, lay Mr Leslie Gale. He chuckled gently. His chief asset in life—some people considered it a liability—was a strong if somewhat untimely sense of humour. Not even a recent escape from a watery grave could damp his enjoyment of the situation. He sat up in his rapidly drying pyjamas, and slapped himself feebly.

"My sainted aunt!" he murmured brokenly. "I shall have to get a flint axe!"

II.

Miss Etherington, white-lipped and struggling gamely with the terrors of utter loneliness, lay face downward upon a patch of coral sand. She had completed her survey of the island, which was not much larger than a couple of full-sized golf-courses; and lo! it was her exclusive property. There were no habitations, and no inhabitants. She lay very still, holding herself in. Once or twice her shoulders heaved.

Suddenly, like music from heaven, the sound of a discreet and thoroughly British cough fell upon her ears, and in a moment the cobweb of terror which was beginning to enshroud her senses was swept away. Hardly believing her good fortune, she sprang up, tossed back her hair from her eyes—and found herself face to face with Mr Leslie Gale.

"Oh!" she gasped. "You?"

"Yes—just me!" he replied. "There is nobody else."

"Are all the others——?" She pointed to the tumbling seas outside the bar.

"I don't know," replied Gale, interpreting the question. "Very likely most of them got away in the lifeboat. You were in the cutter, you know."

"If they escaped, wouldn't they have landed here?" said the girl doubtfully.

"I'm not so sure. That squall which struck us was the tail-end of a cyclone. They may have been swept out to sea. In fact," he added, covertly regarding Miss Etherington's white face and troubled eyes, "I am *sure* they were. I saw them get clear away myself. Anyhow, they are not here. I have been all over the island to see."

"Are there any traces?"

"Yes, but not of human

beings. Chiefly spars and gratings. I collected all I could: they may be useful for —domestic purposes."

It was not, perhaps, a very happy way of putting it. Miss Etherington flushed and demanded—

"What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say. We may have to stay here for months. Are you an expert at household management? Can you tend the fireside, while I labour to keep the home together?"

"I *can't* live here alone with you for months," cried the girl desperately.

"I am afraid it can't be helped," said Mr Gale. "We may get taken off by some passing vessel, but for the present you must be content to live the life of a cave-woman."

Miss Etherington caught the allusion, and her spirit responded instantaneously to the implied challenge.

"First find your cave!" she replied disdainfully.

"By the greatest luck in the world," announced Mr Gale calmly, "I have already done so. Come and see."

He led the way along the sea-shore, eager to exhibit his discovery, Miss Etherington rebelliously following. Already, she reflected, primitive man was asserting himself: in a procession of two she walked in the rear.

"Presently he will expect me to fetch and carry," she said to herself. "Let him dare!"

The cave lay close to the water's edge, in a tiny cove facing south. It ran back some fifteen feet into the heart of a lofty rock, and was floored with white coral sand, warm and dry beneath the rays of the noonday sun which streamed in through the doorway.

"Somewhere to sleep, at any rate," commented Mr Gale cheerfully. "But what chiefly concerns me at present is the discovery of something to eat. Come and find cocoa-nuts."

Once more the procession moved off, its order unaltered. A cocoa-nut palm was speedily found, and Mr Gale embarked upon a brief acrobatic display, which presently furnished them with a supply of solid and liquid refreshment, of which both our islanders stood in considerable need.

"This landscape," said Gale, as he sat contentedly sunning himself after the fashion of man when fed, "reminds me of North Berwick Links, with a few palms dotted about and no tourists. There is Point Garry." He indicated the little promontory in which their cave was situated.

"Have you climbed to the top yet, partner?" he continued.

"No," said Miss Etherington shortly; "I have not."

"Well, you shall," said Mr Gale kindly. "We may see things from there which have hitherto escaped our notice. No good sitting here moping!"

With great energy he led the way to Point Garry and scaled the heights, assisting his companion from time to time.

"We will now scan the horizon," he announced, when they reached the top. "I think that is what Robinson Crusoe would have done under the circumstances. No — nothing! Nothing to be seen but those big rocks jutting up out of the water over there. I noticed them this morning. They look like a row of teeth, don't they?" he inquired chattily.

"I fail to observe any resemblance," replied Miss Etherington.

"No? Well, I always was quick at noticing things from a child," said Mr Gale, with unimpaired *bonhomie*. "We are not all blessed with a good imagin——. Hallo! what's that?" He seized the girl's arm in unaffected excitement, and pointed.

"You are holding my arm," said Miss Etherington coldly. "Let go, please!"

Mr Gale had already done so, in order to make a pair of binoculars of his hands.

"Do you see something projecting up between the two middle teeth?" he asked. "I think—I *think*—yes it is—the bow of a ship! It must be the yacht. It *is* the yacht! I can see the top of her funnel. She must have grounded there. I was right. It was a cyclone. The wind has been playing a perfect game of rounders with itself."

"Do you think there is any one on board?" asked Miss Etherington, suddenly hopeful. After all, a steward or a coal-trimmer would be something with which to dilute Mr Gale. Another woman seemed too much to expect.

"I doubt it, but I will see," said Mr Gale.

"How?"

"I am going to swim out."

"All that way?"

"Yes; not more than half a mile, I fancy."

"Supposing there are——"

Miss Etherington paused, suddenly remembering that the man beside her was unworthy of solicitude.

"Sharks—eh? Perhaps, but I must risk it. If I meet one, I will make a noise like a company promoter, and he won't touch me. Do you know what that old hull means to us? Blankets, tools, food! Perhaps they have left a boat on board."

"Can you swim half a mile?" inquired Miss Etherington.

"It is just about my limit," confessed Mr Gale frankly, "but I can try."

"Would you"—Miss Etherington wavered between common humanity and a feminine desire not to offer anything which could be construed into encouragement—"care to have my cork-jacket?"

"If you are *quite* sure you won't catch a chill without it," replied Mr Gale tenderly.

He proceeded to buckle on the jacket, apparently oblivious to a look which to a thinner-skinned man would have made drowning seem an easy death, and scrambled over the rocks to the water's edge. He poised himself upon a convenient taking-off place.

"Back to tea!" he cried, and disappeared with a splash. It

is not easy to dive cleanly in a cork jacket.

Presently he reappeared, and struck out boldly in the direction of Double-Tooth Islet. Miss Etherington, seated upon the summit of Point Garry, her round chin resting on her hands, followed the course of his black head as it slowly forged its way across the limpid channel. Many thoughts passed through her mind. On the one hand, she hated Mr Leslie Gale to the fullest extent of a nature more than usually well endowed for the purpose. On the other, she knew that there were sharks in these seas—she had seen them. Even now she could descry in the wake of Mr Gale a tiny black dot which might or might not be the dreaded triangular fin. She closed her eyes, and kept them tightly shut for more than half an hour.

When she opened them, a figure, silhouetted against the sky-line upon the summit of Double-Tooth Islet, was triumphantly semaphoring safe arrival. Miss Etherington did not reply. Instead, she rolled gently over on to her side in a dead faint.

After all, as she argued to herself when she came to, she had had a most exhausting twenty-four hours, and her sole diet had been a portion of cocoa-nut.

III.

Mr Gale returned more expeditiously than he had set out, adequately clothed and propelling the yacht's dinghy, which was loaded to the water's edge with miscellaneous stores.

"Help me to unload these things, quickly," he called to Miss Etherington, "and carry them up to the cave. I must go out to the yacht again before she slips off."

"Will you take me with you this time?" asked Miss Etherington.

"Why?"

"I want some things out of my cabin," was the prim reply.

"I'm afraid you haven't got a cabin any more," said Gale. "The stern half of the ship is under water, and I'm saving all I can from the forward part. However, I will select a wardrobe for you from what is available. I always had great natural taste."

He paddled away so quickly that Miss Etherington had no time effectively to ignore this last pleasantry. When Mr Gale returned an hour later he found her still sitting beside the heap of stores on the shore.

"The yacht is lifting with the swell," he announced. "She is just hanging on by her eyebrows now. Rolled over fifteen degrees a minute ago. Gave me a nasty turn, I can tell you, down in the lazarette grubbing for tinned sardines —for you. They are rather a favourite delicacy of yours, aren't they? Hallo! Why haven't you carried up some of these stores? Tired?"

Miss Etherington, who had

been rehearsing her part for this scene for the past hour, replied icily—

"I am not accustomed to be ordered about."

Gale, who was lifting a heavy box out of the boat—the carpenter's tool-chest—laid down his burden and sat on it.

"Insubordination? H'm—a serious matter!" he observed. "We must hold a court-martial this evening." He rose, and continued:—"As you don't appear inclined to assist me to furnish the Home, perhaps you will kindly repair to the Home itself. I will carry this case up for you, and you shall unpack it. Then you can make the place snug with a few deft feminine touches. When I have finished my day's work I shall expect to find my slippers toasting at the fender. That is always done, I believe. Do not butter them, though, or Darby will have a few words to address to Joan. You will find me a fearful domestic tyrant."

Miss Etherington, dimly wondering whether this excursion into the realms of humour masked a threat or merely indicated mental vacuity of the hollowest type, rose from her seat and departed in the direction of the cave. But she did not halt there. Instead, she climbed to the summit of Point Garry, and there sat for a full hour surveying the sunset with an expression upon her features for which a competent under-nurse would have prescribed just one remedy.

The red-hot coppery ball of the sun dropped into the sea so suddenly that one almost expected to hear it sizzle, and the warm darkness of a tropical night rushed down from the heavens. Stars sprang out upon the velvety sky.

"Partner!" called a voice from below.

"I won't—*I won't!*" muttered the girl to herself between her clenched teeth.

There was a pause, and then she heard the feet of Mr Gale climbing the rocky path which led to her eyrie. Presently his head appeared above the edge.

"Shall I bring your supper up to you, or will you come down to it?" he inquired. "I may mention that there is an extra charge for serving meals above stairs. Your food will cost you more, so to speak."

Miss Etherington was in no mood for badinage of this kind.

"I will come," she said stonily.

A bright fire was burning at the mouth of the cave, and a stew of a primitive but inviting character was bubbling in an iron pot hung over the blaze. Crates and cases had been piled into a neat rampart round their demesne. Over the cave mouth itself Mr Gale had hung a stout curtain of sailcloth.

"Be seated, Miss Etherington," said Mr Gale. "That is your place."

He pointed to a seat upon the sand, fashioned out of boat cushions propped against the base of the rock.

Miss Etherington obeyed.

"This is a one-course dinner," continued Mr Gale in deprecat-

ing tones, "but I have no doubt that when you take matters in hand you will be able to turn out something more pretentious. What will you drink? I have a bottle of brandy, which had better be reserved for medicinal purposes, and a dozen stone ginger, which I have retrieved from the wreck at great personal risk, knowing it to be a weakness of yours. We must not be reckless about it. An occasional bottle on special occasions — birthdays and Christmases. I think to-night comes under the head of special occasions. Say when!"

Babbling in this light-hearted strain, Mr Gale proceeded to do the honours of the feast, incidentally making a hearty meal himself. Miss Etherington ate nothing to speak of.

When he had finished, Leslie Gale punctiliously asked for permission to smoke, and lit his pipe.

"I wonder how long half a pound of tobacco will last me?" he mused, puffing comfortably. "A month, perhaps, with care. How ripping the moon looks on the water!"

Miss Etherington did not reply. Her eyes were set. Gale stood up.

"Bed-time," he announced. "You are tired. Come and see your room."

He lit a candle and screwed it into the neck of a bottle. The flame hardly flickered in the soft air.

"Please walk in," he said, holding back the sail-cloth flap.

Miss Etherington obeyed, mechanically.

In one corner of the cave Gale had constructed a sleeping-place of blankets and boat-cushions. On a convenient ledge lay a tin basin; beside it stood a bucket of fair water. Even soap was there. A deal chest served for chair and wardrobe.

Leslie Gale held the candle aloft.

"What do you think of me as an upholsterer?" he asked with pride. "I will see about electric bells and a hot-water tap in the morning."

Miss Etherington made no reply.

Gale set down the candle on the ledge.

"Is there anything else I can do for you in here?" he asked.

"No, thank you."

"Quite sure? It is the last time of asking."

Struck by a curious note in his voice, the girl looked up suddenly.

"Why?" she said.

Their eyes met. Mr Gale's, which were usually remarkable only for a self-satisfied twinkle, were grey and steely.

"Because," he said slowly, "I do not intend to invade your privacy again. Hereafter this cave is *yours*—utterly and absolutely — to withdraw to whenever again you feel inclined, as you did to-day, to doubt my ability to behave like a gentleman. Good night!"

He turned towards the curtained doorway.

"Where — where are you going to shelter?" inquired a low voice behind him.

"On the beach—in an empty sardine tin," he replied. "Good night!"

A childish and flippant rejoinder, the reader will admit, utterly spoiling what might have been a dignified—nay, heroic—exit from the cave. But Leslie Gale was never one to let the sun go down upon his wrath, or at any rate to let the moon rise upon it.

IV.

Miss Etherington awoke next morning to find the sun beating upon the sail-cloth curtain. Half-dazed, and failing for a moment to realise her surroundings, she uttered a stifled cry.

A shadow fell upon the curtain.

"Scream once for the Boots, twice for the chambermaid, three times for the waiter," announced a cheerful voice. "Breakfast is served."

Ten minutes later Miss Etherington found herself, subdued but hungry, partaking of fresh fish fried in oatmeal.

"Any amount of nourishment to be had for the asking over there by those rocks," said the *chef*. "It's lucky. We have enough tinned stuff to last us for months; but tinned turkey and tinned plum-pudding both taste very much alike after a few weeks; so these little fellows"—he helped himself to another fish—"will serve to drive away monotony. Have some cocoa?"

"I hate cocoa," replied Miss Etherington, with a return of her old petulance. Gale's assumption that they were settled upon the island for life angered her, as usual.

"Members," gabbled the incorrigible Mr Gale, "are requested not to throw the waiters out of the window, but to enter all complaints upon the backs of their bills, which will be considered by the Committee at its next session. But I am sorry you don't like cocoa. I will try and find some coffee for you. I am going to make a final trip to the yacht after breakfast."

"Is she still there, then?"

"Yes, I have been out already this morning. I don't think the old thing will hang on much longer, though. There is a heavy swell outside. By the way, do you know why Robinson Crusoe was not alone when he landed on his island? Give it up? Because he found a heavy swell on the beach and a little cove running up the sand . . . No?"—as Miss Etherington remained quite impervious to this outrage—"Well, perhaps not! It might go better with a larger audience. It used to be received with rapture in the nursery at home. I thought perhaps—however, to resume. Is there anything else you require before the yacht goes under?"

"Yes—hairpins," said Miss Etherington unexpectedly.

"I'm *afraid* not," said Gale. "The only cabins not under

water by this time are the engineers', and engineers always do their hair up with spanners. But really"—he respectfully scrutinised his companion's tumbled mane—"it looks very nice as it is."

Miss Etherington, upon whom last night's lesson had not been wasted, smiled, for the first time since their landing; and Mr Gale was conscious deep down in his heart, which possibly was not so light as his tongue, of a tiny thrill of satisfaction and relief. Was this peace—or merely an armistice?

"I must go now," he said. "After that we will formally annex our kingdom and draw up a constitution."

"You are sure it is quite safe on the yacht?" asked Miss Etherington rather anxiously, staring under hand at the lazy swell beyond the rocks.

"I will take great care of myself," said Mr Gale in soothing tones. "Don't be anxious."

"But I *am*," said Miss Etherington warmly.

"This is most gratifying," murmured Mr Gale.

"If you were drowned," explained Miss Etherington, "I should probably starve; and in any case I should have to do all the cooking and washing-up myself."

Apparently it was only an armistice.

Still, when Mr Gale returned half an hour later with a boat-load of what he described as "comforts," he found that his companion had cleared away the breakfast and made their encampment tidy.

He made no comment, but summoned a council of two to discuss the situation. He pointed out their probable position upon the chart.

"We seem to be a long way from anywhere," said the girl dismally.

"We are," said the Job's Comforter beside her; "and what is more, we are a long way from any steamer route. Still, you never know. Luckily we have a spring of water and plenty of tinned food, not to mention fish and products of the soil. We might catch a turtle, with luck, and perhaps I shall find something to shoot. Now, supposing I do the hunting and fishing and general hew-wood-draw-water business, will you undertake the cooking and general housekeeping?"

Miss Etherington nodded.

"We must build a little wooden hut," continued Gale, with all the enthusiasm of a small boy playing at Red Indians. "I can sleep in one half and keep the stores in the other. A sort of lean-to. We will regularly *organise* this island before we have done with it! I wonder, now, about clothes. What we have on won't last for ever. It's a pity your cabin was under water, or I might have salved a regular wardrobe for you. Number Seven, wasn't it?"

Miss Etherington nodded.

"By the way," she asked, "what was yours?"

"Number Three. Why?"

"Oh, nothing."

"Well, as for clothes," continued the indefatigable Mr Gale, "if we haven't got them we must make them. Can you cut out?" he inquired sternly, regarding his companion with the austere air of a Dorcas Society secretary.

"Don't you think," interposed Miss Etherington drily, "that you are taking rather too much thought for the morrow—not to speak of the day after to-morrow? May I make a suggestion?"

"By all means," said Mr Gale indulgently.

"Let us go and look round for more ships," said Miss Etherington.

The organiser, a trifle dashed, rose and meekly followed practical Eve to the summit of the rock. But there were no ships.

Mr Leslie Gale turned severely upon his companion.

"You see?" he said. "Twenty minutes wasted! And life is so short. Let us return and make plans."

Miss Etherington calmly followed him down again.

Still, her suggestion was not without effect. A clause was inserted in the constitution of their kingdom to the effect that Gale should climb Point Garry (as they agreed to call the headland) twice daily, at dawn and sundown, and search the horizon for passing vessels, Miss Etherington performing the same duty at other times throughout the day, during her companion's absence at the chase.

The rest of that morning was occupied with what is usually known as "settling in," a process which appears to be as inevitable to castaways in the South Pacific as to semi-detached suburbanites much nearer home. At midday Miss Etherington dished up her first meal, at which, pleasantly tired, they lay side by side upon the warm sand and conversed quite amicably. Both realised simultaneously that there is something very uniting in working to retrieve a joint disaster. With one impulse Mr Gale edged a little nearer to Miss Etherington, and Miss Etherington edged a little farther away from Mr Gale.

Thus Nature, who sets the dockleaf beside the nettle, adjusts the fine balance of sex-deportment.

When they had eaten, Leslie Gale hauled the dinghy into a shady patch of sand and proceeded to invert it over a blanket.

"What are you doing?" inquired Miss Etherington, wiping a plate.

"I propose to take a siesta," said Mr Gale. "I have been working like a coolie since four o'clock this morning. I made two trips before you were up, and I am done to the world. I advise you to retire to your cave of harmony and do likewise. We must keep ourselves fit, you know, and—and—be merry and bright. I only wish," he added awkwardly, "that you could have found yourself in more congenial company."

Then he crawled hurriedly under the dinghy's protecting shade, and rolled himself up in the blanket.

Left to her own devices, Miss Etherington, in obedience to an idea which had been obtruding itself upon her all morning, entered the cave and inspected her cork-jacket, which lay neatly rolled up upon a ledge. Upon its outer surface, as already related, was neatly stencilled the legend, *S.Y. Island Queen, R.Y.S.—State Room No.* 3.

Very slowly and reflectively Miss Etherington rolled up the jacket and put it back upon its ledge. Then, quitting the cave, she climbed up upon Point Garry and listlessly scanned the horizon.

She returned an hour later. The expression upon her features would have been ascribed by an expert in physiognomy to the workings of a guilty but unrepentant spirit.

Presently she awoke Mr Leslie Gale, and set before him an evening meal whose excellence she did her best to discount by a display of cold aloofness which would have blighted the appetite of a less determined optimist.

V.

"My hole, I think," said Mr Gale.

"Well," remarked Miss Etherington with asperity, "if lizards are going to lie across the line of my putt on *every* green, I don't see how you can help winning a hole occasionally."

"These things will happen on sporting courses," said Mr Gale sympathetically. "Still you could have taken advantage of the by-law which says that lizards may be lifted or swept aside (but not pressed down) without penalty. Now for Point Garry! You get a stroke here. All square and one to play."

They stood upon the seventeenth green of the Island golf-course. Their clubs were two home-made instruments of the hockey-stick variety, their equipment being completed by a couple of solid but well-gnawed indiarubber dog balls, which had been employed upon the yacht to afford recreation and exercise to their hostess's terriers. It was five o'clock in the afternoon. Supply, as represented by Mr Gale, the purveyor, having temporarily satisfied Demand, as represented by Miss Etherington, the housekeeper, with sufficient comestibles and combustibles for the next twenty-four hours, the pair were indulging in a little exercise before proceeding from labour to refreshment.

The golf-course was an abiding joy. It had been opened with much ceremony a fortnight ago, Miss Etherington driving off the first ball from the first tee, and Mr Gale gallantly retrieving the same from the Pacific Ocean. There were eighteen holes, ranging from five to seventy yards in length, and the course abounded in natural hazards of the most diverse description. There were

no caddies, but, as Mr Gale remarked, a caddy when you possess only one club looks ostentatious.

The golf-course is a characteristic product of British occupation of alien territory. John Bull, we all know, has a weakness for descending casually upon the unappropriated spaces of the earth, the fact that they do not strictly belong to him being, in his view, fully balanced by the fact that he causes them to prosper as they have never prospered before. If you make a desert, he argues, blossom like the rose, what does it matter whose desert it was previously? His methods of procedure seldom vary, whether he be an official man-in-possession or a younger son in search of a career. Having adjusted the local constitution to his satisfaction, he sets to work to assist the slightly flustered inhabitants to make the place pay. After that he lays out a golf-course.

There being no inhabitants upon the island, and consequently no laws to adjust, our friends had been able to get to work on the golf-course at once. Their new life had altered them surprisingly little. After three months of a semi-savage existence, so far from reverting to the service of primitive Nature, they had adapted Nature to the requirements of modern society and turned the island into a very fair imitation of a fashionable health-resort. Had they been of another caste — say, the mechanical — they would have impressed their mark in another fashion none the less indelible. There would have been water-wheels, mills, and sluices. Being of the class called leisured, accustomed to extract as much enjoyment from life as possible, and on no account ever to worry about anything, they had settled down in one of Nature's most typical strongholds to the nearest approach they could compass to the careless artificial life that they were accustomed to live. And so powerful are use and wont, that these two unruffled Britons bade fair to expel Nature from her own stronghold. Cave man and cave woman they certainly were not yet. They were members of a class which has always been carelessly indifferent to outside influences, and does not easily change its habits or mode of speech. Consequently the island had not barbarised them. They were gently denaturalising the island.

Mr Gale took the eighteenth hole in a perfect nine, Miss Etherington's ball overrunning the green and taking refuge in a lie with which only a corkscrew could have coped. The victor having offered to the vanquished the insincere condolences usual upon such occasions, the pair sat down amicably enough to enjoy the afternoon breeze.

"What is for dinner to-night?" inquired Mr Gale.

"Turtles' eggs, fried sardines, biscuits, and bananas,"

replied Miss Etherington. "It's the last tin of sardines but one."

"Oh! How are the stores in general lasting out?"

"There seems to be plenty of most things. We were rather extravagant at first, but since you developed into such a mighty hunter——"

"And you into such a nailing housekeeper."

"We have become almost self-supporting."

At this fulsome interchange of compliments the pair turned and smiled upon one another.

"And we seem to thrive on it," said Mr Gale complacently. "I must have gone up a stone in weight, and I feel as skittish as a young unicorn. You look pretty fit, too."

He turned and surveyed his companion. She was wearing the smart blue skirt in which she had landed on the island, sadly frayed and bleached, but still bearing the *imprimatur* of Dover Street, together with a flannel cricket-shirt. Round her neck was knotted a coloured handkerchief. Her feet were bare. The hairpin difficulty had never been overcome, and Miss Etherington usually kept her rippling mane plaited into a convenient pigtail. That appendage having developed a habit at the end of a full swing of dealing its owner a severe buffet in the face, it was Miss Etherington's custom when playing golf to gather her locks into a heap upon the top of her head, and confine the same within a coloured headband, after the fashion of the stage brigand or coon. Just now she was unfastening the knot of this contrivance.

Mr Gale, discoursing at ease upon diet and hygiene, suddenly tripped in his speech, for without warning a soft wavy cascade fell about the girl's shoulders. Through the glistening veil he could descry the droop of her lashes and the curve of her cheek. His tongue began to frame silent phrases about the tangles of Neæra's hair, and his heart beat foolishly. Of late he had become increasingly conscious of this weakness—nay, vice. Common decency seemed to forbid such sentiments towards an unprotected female. But——

"Thank you," said Miss Etherington frigidly, "I am glad you think I am putting on flesh; but you need not look at me like that. This is not Smithfield Market."

Mr Gale's attack of sentimentality passed hastily.

"Do you know," he said, "that we have been in this island for three months?"

"Have we?" replied Miss Etherington. "It seems longer," she added untruthfully.

"And I don't think," pursued Mr Gale, "that we have made the most of our opportunities."

Miss Etherington scented danger, but could not forbear to inquire—

"In what way?"

"Well," replied Mr Gale, "look at the things Robinson Crusoe did. He built a boat——"

"We have a boat already,"

remarked matter-of-fact Miss Etherington.

"Yes, that *is* a bit of a hardship," agreed Mr Gale. "Then, didn't he teach a parrot to talk? Couldn't we——"

"There are no parrots on this island," replied Miss Etherington gently.

"Quite true, but you haven't grasped the principle of what I am driving at. Here we are, living on a desert island, and so far we haven't done anything that two people couldn't have accomplished by going for a picnic up the Thames. I even shave. We eat food out of tins; we do a little bathing and fishing in the morning, and play golf in the afternoon, and sit about in the evening and say how jolly it must be in Town just now. It seems to me that we are out of the picture somehow. We ought to be a little more primitive—barbaric. Do you follow me?"

"No," said Miss Etherington. "In my opinion really nice people continue to behave just as nicely on a desert island as on a yacht."

"But don't you think," continued Mr Gale perseveringly, "that we might train two goats to play bridge with us, or teach a turtle to sing, or something? Then we should feel that we were getting back to Nature—quite biblical, in fact. 'The voice of the turtle is heard in the land,' and so forth."

"If you are going to talk nonsense," said Miss Etherington, "I think I will go and get dinner ready."

"When we got away from here," continued the imaginative Mr Gale, "we could take the little troupe with us, and earn an honest living on the music-hall stage. I once saw some performing seals at the Palace. I should think performing turtles would get quite as big a salary; and then when the public got tired of them we could sell them to the Lord Mayor for soup. That is what is known in commercial circles as a by-product."

He ran on, and Miss Etherington watched him stealthily through her lashes. A man and woman, however antipathetic, cannot consort together upon an uninhabited island for three months without gaining some insight into one another's characters and motives. Miss Etherington knew the meaning of this performance. Mr Gale suspected her of low spirits, and was endeavouring to cheer her up. He was not doing it very well; but after all, good intentions count for something, and Miss Etherington felt grateful, despite herself. She continued to watch him furtively. He was a presentable youth. He sat beside her, healthy, clean-cut, and bronzed, wearing a ragged flannel shirt and an old pair of duck trousers. His hands were clapsed about his knees; his eyes were fixed on vacancy; and his tongue wagged unceasingly. A hare-brained and occasionally bumptious young man, but a man for all that.

Suddenly Gale inquired—

"I say, what do you think of me now? Has your opinion

of me altered at all, after three months of me neat?"

The next moment he repented of his inquiry. He had firmly resolved never to embarrass the girl in this fashion so long as they remained on the island together. Now he had broken his word to himself. Miss Etherington's rippling mane had been a little too much for his fortitude.

But the girl did not appear offended. She replied quite simply—

"Yes, I have. I think you have behaved very courageously in the face of all our difficulties—"

"Self-preservation is the first——" began Gale awkwardly.

"—And I have to thank you for a good deal as well," continued Miss Etherington, with slightly heightened colour. "Besides saving my life—you *did*, you know: that was your life-jacket I was wearing that morning—you have behaved very courteously and honourably to me ever since we found ourselves here, and I am grateful."

This was well spoken. Mr Gale was silent for a moment. Then he inquired—

"You did not expect such behaviour from me?"

"I—I never doubted you after the first few hours," said Miss Etherington in a low voice. "I was not quite myself then. Do you forgive me? You will, won't you?"

Their eyes met. Mr Gale's suddenly blazed.

"When you look at me and talk to me like that," he almost shouted, "I could—Ahem! Ha! H'm! Quite so! *My* error!"

Miss Etherington's cheeks were crimson.

"I think I will take a sedative scramble up Point Garry," he concluded lamely.

"Perhaps it would be as well," agreed Miss Etherington. "Don't be late for dinner."

Mr Gale turned to go, and then paused.

"You don't ask me," he remarked in a slightly injured voice, "whether my opinion of *you* has changed at all."

"No," replied Miss Etherington. "There is no need."

"I wonder what in thunder she meant by that," mused the harassed Mr Gale, as he scrambled up Point Garry. "Heaven help a man left alone on a desert island with a girl! And I actually thought it would make things easier! Flint axe, and all that. Why don't I—Hallo, hallo, hallo! Steady, my boy! Is wisions about?"

He had reached the summit of the bluff. There, two miles to the northward, slipping gently over the rollers under easy sail, he beheld a ship—a three-masted schooner.

VI.

For a castaway, hungering for a re-entry into civilisation, Mr Gale's subsequent behaviour was peculiar.

He began by staring stockishly at the passing vehicle of deliverance, evidently the prey of conflicting impulses.

Beside him lay a neatly piled heap of firewood, collected for such crises as this. His eye fell thereon. He regarded it absently, and then raised his eyes to the schooner, which went about and began to slant towards the island.

Mr Gale, instead of shouting or semaphoring, dropped suddenly to his knees and crept furtively back whence he came, until he arrived at the edge of the little plateau, to a position which commanded their cave and encampment. Miss Etherington, from whose eyes the schooner was screened by the intervening bulk of Point Garry, was diligently preparing dinner. Mr Gale gazed down upon her long and intently. Her sleeves were rolled up for culinary duties, and her arms looked very round and white. Snatches of a song she was singing floated upwards to his ears. Mr Gale's pulse quickened; his purpose hardened; his conscience died within him.

"I *can't* do it," he muttered —"I can't!" A box of matches dropped from his nerveless fingers. . . .

Presently he crawled upon his hands and knees—he would not even risk the exposure of his figure against the sky-line now—to a position from which he could see the schooner. The breeze had freshened; she had gone about again, and was bowling away from the island.

VII.

An hour later they met for their evening meal. With characteristic fidelity to the customs of their order, they invariably dressed for dinner—that is to say, Miss Etherington put on shoes and stockings and changed from her cricket-shirt to a silk blouse, while Mr Gale attired himself in a suit of comparatively white drill which had once been the property of the chief steward of the yacht.

They were very silent that night. Mr Gale's conscience was coming to life again. It was true that he loved Miss Etherington—far more, indeed, than that usually astute maiden could have gathered from the somewhat flippant and informal manner in which he had declared his passion — but this fact, urged his conscience, did not give him the sole right to her society. He had robbed her of her birthright that afternoon: he had deliberately cut her off from a return to the great world and all it held for her. He had behaved like a cad, he felt, and being an honourable young man, he was filled with a desire to make confession.

"You are not very amusing to-night," remarked Miss Etherington suddenly.

For purposes of playful badinage, there was a tacit understanding between them that everything which went wrong on the island — from cyclones to a fit of the dumps —was Leslie Gale's fault; and that long-suffering young man was growing accustomed to being treated as something

between a sinful little schoolboy and a rather incompetent court jester.

"Am I to sparkle?" he inquired meekly.

"Yes."

"I don't feel quite up to it."

"Well, flicker, anyhow!" urged Miss Etherington.

Mr Gale reflected, and replied—

"I can't do it to-night. That moon makes me humpy. Look at it! What a whopper!"

Both sat silently surveying the great silvery disc which hung above them, turning their little cove, with its yellow sand and green-clad rocks, into an etching in black and white. There was a long silence, broken by a tremulous sigh from Miss Etherington. Evidently the moon was beginning to exercise its usual pernicious influence.

"To-night's Great Thought —what is it?" inquired Mr Gale encouragingly.

"I was thinking," said Miss Etherington dreamily, "what a good thing it would be if all the people who disliked one another for no reason at all could be dropped down together upon an island like this for a month or two."

Mr Gale, knowing full well that a woman never embarks upon a general statement without intending it to have a personal application, carefully turned this sentiment over in his mind.

Then suddenly he glowed duskily.

"You mean," he said unsteadily, "that most people improve on acquaintance."

"Yes," said Miss Etherington deliberately—"I do."

There was a pause. Then Gale continued—

"Even—people like me?"

Miss Etherington nodded.

"Even people like you," she said. "And," she added unexpectedly, "even people like me."

Mr Gale glanced at her, then stirred in his seat and took a mighty breath of resolution.

"You could *never* be improved upon by any acquaintance, however long."

Then he heaved a great sigh of relief. An Englishman does not say these things easily — that is, when he means them.

Miss Etherington subjected her companion to a fleeting but adequate scrutiny, and saw that he was once more at her mercy. But she felt no desire to wither him up—to annihilate the flank thus rashly exposed. Three months of life in the open had entirely cured her of conceit and petty meanness. Still they had not eradicated in her the natural predilection of a woman for dallying with the fish upon the hook.

"I wonder if you mean that," she remarked in a voice which, though in form severe, in substance invited further folly on the part of Mr Gale.

"Yes, I do mean it," he replied, without heat or passion. "But I am not going to pursue the subject, because I have no right. I have just done you a serious wrong. I want to make confession."

He turned to her, like a penitent to a shrine.

"This evening," he said, "when I climbed to Point Garry on my usual excursion, I saw a ship."

Miss Etherington started, but made no further sign.

"She was quite close," continued Gale, "and I could have caught her attention by signalling. But—I didn't! I let her go! There!"

He stood motionless at her feet, awaiting sentence.

Miss Etherington raised her clear gray eyes to his.

"Why did you let the ship go?" she asked.

"Because I love you so," said Gale simply. "I could not bear to be parted from you, as I knew I should be. It seemed too cruel to bring this life to an end, just as——"

"Just as what?" asked the girl quickly.

"Just as you were beginning to get used to it," concluded Leslie Gale, coward.

Miss Etherington was silent for a little time. Then she said—

"You made no attempt to signal?"

"None."

"Concealed yourself, perhaps?"

Gale nodded miserably, and waited.

Miss Etherington dropped her eyes again, and began to scrutinise the tips of her shoes.

"I wouldn't worry about it too much if I were you," she said.

"Why?"

"I saw the ship too," said the girl demurely.

VIII.

They sat on in the moonlight—and on, and on, and on. About half-past ten Mr Gale had respectfully but firmly taken Miss Etherington's hand. Miss Etherington had made a half-hearted attempt to withdraw it. Mr Gale had apologetically but pertinaciously held on. After that they began to talk, and although they had not been out of one another's company for the best part of three months, not one of the many topics with which they had whiled away that lengthy period intruded itself into the conversation. They seemed to have turned over a new page in the book of life together. Under their eyes it lay, fair, blank, and gleaming with blessed possibilities beneath the rays of a tropical moon. And for the moment they were well content to leave it so. There would never be another hour like this. Let to-morrow, with its prosaic meticulous pen and inkhorn, stand far off and wait!

At last Miss Etherington rose.

"I am sleepy," she said. "Let me go now."

Gale held her to him for a moment longer, caressing her loosely-knotted shimmering hair.

"Phyllis!" he murmured reverently, and raised his face skyward, as if to give thanks. From the neighbourhood of his right shoulder there arose a muffled observation. For a moment he failed to take note of it, for he was gaping dumbly over Miss Etherington's head at the moon-

lit waters of their bay. Miss Etherington accordingly spoke again.

"I wish," she murmured—"I wish there were a lot of people to tell."

"To tell what? That we are"—he coughed nervously—"engaged?"

"Yes. Engaged sounds queer on a desert island, doesn't it? But when a girl gets engaged she wants to tell *everybody*."

"That's strange. When *I* get engaged I feel that the secret is too precious to pass on to anybody. It's mine! mine! ours! ours! 'Ours'—how wonderful that sounds, after years of just 'mine.' But"—he brought his gaze back seaward again—"do you really want a crowd of people to tell your news to?"

"Yes, please," said Miss Etherington meekly.

"Well, shut your eyes, and don't open them until I tell you."

Miss Etherington obeyed. Mr Gale rotated her carefully until she faced the calm glittering ocean.

"Abracadabra! Likewise What ho! Open your eyes!" he commanded.

Miss Etherington obeyed. There before her in the moonlight, half a mile from the shore, like a misty sea-wraith, floated a great white yacht, drifting to an anchorage. Even as they gazed there was a luminous splash, and the cable rattled out.

IX.

They were taken home next day on board the *Morning Star*, brought out to search for them by their host and the other survivors of the wreck.

For many years Mr Leslie Gale never ceased to bless the three-masted schooner whose passing had been the means of bringing them together. In fact, he exalted that nameless vessel into a fetish, ascribing to it match-making properties bordering upon the supernatural. It was Mrs Gale who pricked the bubble.

"I wonder, old lady," observed her husband one day, "if you would ever have found out that you really cared for me if you hadn't seen that old hooker go sailing by—what?"

"I wonder," said Mrs Gale patiently.

"It was lucky," continued the fatuous Leslie, "that no ship turned up earlier on, before you had acquired a taste for me, so to speak. That would have put me in the cart, wouldn't it?"

"Would it?"

"Yes. Supposing that it had happened sooner? Supposing, for instance, that after we had been together for a matter of three weeks, instead of three months, you had climbed Point Garry one fine day and seen a ship go sailing by? What then?"

Mrs Leslie Gale arose, and began to put away her work.

"I did," she said briefly. "Twice."

BUSH PIRATES.

BY MAJOR J. STEVENSON-HAMILTON,
WARDEN, TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT GAME RESERVE.

THE breakfast-table is laid in the verandah of the old blockhouse overlooking the Sabi river. The midsummer sun, already high in the heavens, indicates that the hour is close on 11 A.M. From the verandah, with its iron-fronted breastwork, loop-holed for rifles, and now crowned thickly with geraniums, the eye can roam over an immense panorama of tree-tops, monotonous save in their varying tints of green, to where, purple from distance, the far-away ridges cut the sky-line to north and east and west. Peeping up behind these ridges may be discerned on clear days the bold escarpment of the Drakensberg Mountains, dim blue and mysterious at sixty miles; while balancing them, as it were, on the eastern horizon, rises hazily the lesser outline of the Lebombo Hills, the frontier mark of the Transvaal and Portuguese East Africa.

We glance casually over the landscape before sitting down. Away to the north there, beyond the river, two or three dark specks are gliding through the deep blue of the sky, and are evidently moving with intention towards some definite spot. Vultures without any doubt, and on the track of meat. Smoothly sinking earthwards, they disappear among the trees a mile or so down river, and as they do so another and yet another bird appears, dropping, as it seems, directly out of the sky, to vanish from sight at the same spot. With a heavy flapping of wings a great griffon now passes down river on a level with, and not fifty yards from, the blockhouse. Resting perhaps in the topmost branches of some old dead forest giant, he must from his perch have caught sight of the movements of his relatives, and is making haste to join them. Ali, the faithful, who, white-robed and silent-footed, at this moment enters with the items of our not very pretentious *menu*, has his attention drawn to the matter, and remarks, with just the faintest suggestion of interest, that not only has he noticed the movements of the birds, but has already taken action thereon. Ali takes immense pride in his mastery of what he believes to be the English language, and "I go my down, please," conveys to his master, habituated by years of conversational intercourse, more than it perhaps might to a member of the general public. What we understand is that he has already dispatched someone to ascertain the wherefore of the gathering. It is one of our most rigid principles in the Game Reserve that the underlying reason for any such

assembly of the feathered tribe must at once be investigated; that if some slayer of the innocent has been accessory thereto, as usually is the case, he may receive, if possible, swift justice.

Breakfast has been over some time, when of a sudden steps are heard, followed by voices in conversation. Among some scraps of the latter which reach us seems to occur the word "madantshe." Then comes a knock at the door, and, before he has spoken a word, the expression on Jafuta's face suffices to confirm the impression gathered by our ears. Yes, it is wild dogs: they have killed an impala, and there are apparently quite a lot of them in the pack.

In some ten minutes we are equipped and ready. Outside wait Jase and Steamela, the former hatless, in a khaki jacket innocent of all buttons, and a loin-cloth of uncertain colour and age; the latter crowned with a very ancient and almost brimless straw hat, a painfully insufficient shirt, and the few remains of a pair of cast service trousers completing his attire. Each firmly grasps several formidable looking assagais, and a knobkerrie —that is, a hard wood stick having an enormous round head of one piece with it. They carry their sandals in their hands, ready to put on should very rocky or thorn-strewn ground have to be negotiated. Good trackers both, as trackers go nowadays, but I think they would prefer to go into the bush clad in the full glory of their best police uniforms, handcuffs and all; they feel certain that the latter especially would in some obscure way affect, perhaps hypnotise, the wrongdoers, and so ensure success. We, on the other hand, have a not unnatural partiality for our trackers being as nearly as possible in the garb of Adam, and so we have struck a compromise in these shreds and patches of European garb, which, together with our own, are likely to be largely claimed as the prey of the wait-a-bit thorns before the end of the day. Water-bottles, field-glasses, and other paraphernalia of the chase are hung round our followers, and there then remain a few necessary instructions for Ali in regard to having some meal ready for us whenever we happen to return, ere we wend our way down to the drift where the ancient flat-bottomed punt awaits us.

Three minutes' energetic poling and one haul over a midstream bank brings us to the other side of the Sabi, where, having dragged up the boat high and dry against eventualities, we plunge through the belt of long and sharp-pointed reeds which girdles this, like most other African streams. Turning along the firm bank, we make our way by the edge of the bush to the point down-stream where some vultures may still be seen hovering and descending. The sky is clear except for a few white clouds banked low down in the south, and an occasional fleecy tag, which,

driven before the northerly breeze, floats away as if to join them. It has been very hot for the past week, and though the north wind does not blow with the deadly persistence and furnace breath of the last three days, to face it is still rather like standing in front of a red-hot oven, and the air seems full of fine impalpable dust, and of a heat which can be *seen*. Not perhaps an ideal day for tracking work, but the opportunity must be taken when it offers. At our approach many of the vultures rise in a cluster from the ground and flap heavily away to adjacent trees, whence they may watch the proceedings of the intruders. These are the first comers, of course. Later arrivals are still dropping in from all directions, their swelling numbers far in excess of the amount of food provided for them. It is not a difficult matter to find the "kill." Right in the middle of a little open space in the bush, the grass all around trampled, bloodstained, and strewn with the feathers of contending vultures, lies a small heap of nearly clean-picked bones and some tattered fragments of soiled skin: remains of what an hour or two ago was a proud and graceful impala ram. A few yards away, the detached head, some shreds of flesh still adhering to it, bears intact the handsome lyrate horns, contemptuously discarded alike by beast and bird. Possibly the vultures on the trees around, gazing with steady solemn eyes, may share with our native followers a passing emotion of contempt for the white man capable of wasting even a moment in the examination of anything so utterly unpractical. The African has, however, for his part, long given up speculating upon the motives which urge the European along the paths of profitless eccentricity. The interest in trophies is on a par with the tending of garden flowers, which bloom for a few days and then wither, and are never of the slightest use for culinary purposes: there may be, perhaps, some secret enchantment connected with both matters, or it may be only madness, and anyhow it is no concern of his. Nevertheless the inborn politeness of our followers prompts them to smile and beam sympathetically, while they expatiate on the size of the trophy and the iniquity of the robbers who have dared to slay so fine an animal—in the Game Reserve, too! In their hearts they are merely lamenting that the vultures have not left a little more meat on the bones. Indeed, between beast and bird it is surprising that anything at all was left, but doubtless the majority of the hunting dogs had already fed pretty substantially this morning. On his first visit to the "kill" the careful Jase collected most of the still remaining pickings, and brought them back with him to help to eke out the evening meal. He now selects yet a few more bones, and, removing them a little distance, covers them over securely with

branches and grass, that, hidden from prying eyes, they may rest safe until we can retrieve them on our return journey.

And now to business. The tracks of the pack are clearly enough visible in the dry sand —narrow footprints, as large as those of greyhounds, the nail-marks defined here and there where the ground is firm. Here on the shady side of this rock the animals were resting when the "boys" disturbed them. See how they have been rolling about in the enjoyment of a sand-bath. Hence their tracks lead straight away through a patch of reeds, up the bank and into the bush. The victim, when pulled down, had, as is the wont of hunted impalas, been straining every nerve to reach the river, well knowing the averseness of his pursuers from crossing deep water where crocodiles may lurk. For a few minutes after entering the bush all is plain sailing for us: the green grass, some two feet or more high, shows by its depression where a number of animals have lately pushed through it. For a space of two or three hundred yards from the bank fairly large trees grow — their roots, no doubt, reaching to the river level; beyond this lies a stretch of nearly bare and very rocky ground, on which grass grows scantily in small detached tufts. Here there is a slight check, while the trackers cast around for the line. A minute or two passes, and then a muttered exclamation from Steamala indicates that he has once more picked it up. We hasten to him, and, leaving the rocks behind, are once more off at score. The soil is hard, but the bent grass shows a clear way. We are now in the characteristic forest of the country. Trees of a height seldom exceeding twenty feet, gnarled and twisted by annual fires, grow, now close together, now far apart, just as chance has thrown the lucky seeds. Sometimes there are small open spaces in which, for some unintelligible reason, nothing but grass will grow; and, again, there are dense patches where the trees are set close, and the spaces between them are filled with young shoots and brambles of the most uncompromising kind. At present the wind is absolutely favourable, blowing strongly, almost directly, in our faces, and so disposing of more than half the anxiety connected with bush-hunting. Any moment may bring us on terms with our quarry, and we step briskly forward, filled with the optimism born of physical freshness and the apparent smiles of fortune.

A hastily tied bootlace calls with insistent voice, and on rejoining the trackers after the few seconds employed in its adjustment, we find them standing looking at something on the ground at their feet. It is merely a little piece of chestnut skin and a few small splinters of bone; but easily recognised as the remains of a young impala lamb—just a fair meal for one hunting dog.

Since it was evidently killed early in the morning, some hours before the ram met his fate, it is clear that the pack must have been hunting all over this part of the bush since early dawn. This fact will certainly complicate matters for us. Indeed we are not long in realising the extent of our troubles; for we soon find ourselves amid a maze of tracks, going in all directions, intermingled with each other, and in many places trodden over by those of the herds of game which have since passed. The marks left by the soft pads of the carnivora are never the easiest things in the world to decipher on hard ground; and when in addition to their faintness they cross and intercross as they do here, it becomes extremely difficult to pick out the right ones to follow. A succession of wide casts is necessary, and while we thus thread the bush in all directions we happen everywhere on traces of the morning's work. Our steps are most frequently arrested by the remains of the unfortunate little impala lambs. This is the height of the lambing season for these antelopes, the time when all their natural enemies are most active and destructive.

There is no wild animal in Africa which deals out such wholesale destruction to certain kinds of game as the hunting dog. Though its prey, generally speaking, consists of the lesser ungulates, from reedbucks downwards, when pressed by hunger it does not hesitate to attack the largest of the antelope tribe—not excepting even the formidable sable. Well authenticated records exist of almost every other kind of predatory beast having in turn formed its, at any rate temporary, quarry. Leopards have been known to be chased up trees; hyænas have been found in process of being mobbed to death; the lion himself, when found solitary, is sometimes pursued by a pack; and though the stories current of the fear which the king of the forest habitually displays of hunting dogs generally are without doubt much exaggerated, there have been known cases of single lions being chased away from their "kills" and pursued for considerable distances. Bush pirate and Ishmael as he is, strangely enough towards man the hunting dog seems to betray little or no aggressive tendency. Notwithstanding the fear which he often inspires in the unhabituated by his occasional reluctance to give ground, I have never heard of an attack having been made even upon an unarmed native; nor among the many I have seen dispatched at close quarters when wounded have I ever noticed a single instance of any disposition to ferocity.

Wandering about in bands over huge areas of wild country, and seldom remaining more than a few days in any one locality, the hunting dog is probably less frequently encountered than any other kind of carnivore, and therefore in less degree than any

other has he experience of man and his ways. There is at least no doubt that when this experience has been acquired, few creatures show more haste in escaping from man's presence, or display more intelligence in doing so. But if there is little ground of complaint against him as regards man personally, it is a very different matter where the latter's flocks and herds are concerned. When the farmer first begins to graze his sheep in a wild country, one of the chief, if not the most dangerous, of his enemies is the hunting dog. Sweeping down upon a flock, a pack of these animals will in a very few minutes entirely annihilate it, killing and rending apparently for the mere pleasure of doing so, and then, having completed the slaughter, will probably be miles away, wreaking the same destruction elsewhere, ere the irate owner and his friends have time to arrive upon the scene. A long crusade against them in Cape Colony resulted at length in their virtual extinction in the settled parts, but in all the wilder corners of South Africa the same thing still goes on, and raids upon small herds of native goats and sheep are everywhere, where these pests exist, of constant occurrence. Since they never return to their "kill," trapping and poisoning at the spot where the occurrence took place are of no effect, and they are probably quite the most difficult of the larger carnivora to expel from a district suitable to them.

Constantly stumbling over fresh "kills," putting up groups of vultures, and now losing, now again finding the spoor, we at length enter a part of the forest where the grass is growing high and rank. Here the stems, pressed down by the passage of the pack earlier in the day, have had time to recover themselves, the soil itself is too hard to offer the slightest indication of footprints, and tracking, at all times a slow and laborious process, becomes more and more difficult. The sun is blazing down in a most insistent manner. One's brain feels as if it was being cooked, and standing and loitering about makes matters still more trying. It is half-past two o'clock, the warmest part of the day; the ground is baked red-hot wherever there is no long grass to shelter it, and from the whole earth is reflected a heat which ever grows in intensity. So, choosing the line of least resistance, we seek about for a suitable tree under which it may be possible to obtain a little temporary refuge. It is not such an easy matter as it looks, however. There are, it is true, multitudes of trees of all shapes, ages, and sizes, but each vies with its neighbour in lack of all shade-giving properties. Scraggy acacias for the most part, their chief mission in life seems to be to grow living thorns to rend the garments of the passer-by, and to strew dead ones on the ground to pierce his flesh should he unwisely sit down in their vicinity. A patient search is at length rewarded by the discovery of a small marula-tree, the apples, beloved of all game, lying thickly

strewn underneath it. These apples, though, like many other wild fruits, consisting mostly of stone, are quite good to bite when one is hot and thirsty. The natives long ago discovered that they are capable of being brewed into a very intoxicating drink, and so during their season they are highly popular both with beast and man. Munching the apples, and varying the operation with an occasional pull at the water-bottle, we sit at ease and watch the efforts of the trackers. The sun does not worry them much. Steamela has even taken off his battered straw hat and now carries it in his hand, occasionally using it as a fan. Backwards and forwards they cast in all directions, eyes glued to ground, occasionally stopping for a short consultation, working in the most praiseworthy manner, considering how the pursuit of this particular kind of quarry bores them. So half an hour passes, and then both return with dejected mien to report that all signs of the tracks have been lost. They sit down, and, refraining from suggestion, elaborately inhale snuff.

For some time we have been taking stock of the ground in front, that is to say to the north-west, where the forest sinks suddenly into a deep valley, containing of course one of the dry stream-beds which everywhere intersect the country. There will be shade and no doubt a pool of water. It seems a not unlikely place to try for our lost pack. Even should they not have settled down there for the day, at least we may be able to find some trace of their passage in the yielding sand. The proposition is laid before our attendants, who, albeit without any violent enthusiasm, agree that it seems the best, in fact the only, thing to do; and so we get ready for another move. It takes a certain amount of will power to force oneself out of the shade into the broiling sun again, and there is a heavy feeling in the air, telling of atmospheric pressure, which does not conduce to energy. One experiences that feeling of disinclination to move which also intrudes itself when it is necessary to leave the dry shelter of house or tent to brave a tropical downpour of rain. Everything is drowsy, the birds are nearly silent, the insects drone only in the more shady spots. More energetic than the others, a swarm of bees, intent on change of quarters, pass with a deep humming noise overhead. As we descend the valley the scrub becomes thicker, we have constantly to bend and stoop under overhanging boughs; wait-a-bit thorns, sharp and tenacious as fish-hooks, among their innocent-looking little oval leaves of tender green, imperiously pluck at our clothing, shreds of which constantly remain to mark our passage. Thorns sometimes form barriers so impassable to progress that we have to make long detours to avoid being held up in blind alleys. Some of the bushes are dead and dry, skeletons of hard white-grey wood, with sharp broken ends, which it is well

to avoid stumbling against, though the thorns have vanished from them long ago. Others are dense and green, and bristling with spikes. There are little hooked thorns, long straight thorns three or four inches from base to point, and sometimes a combination of the two; but very few trees are unprovided with some protection of the kind. Nature seems intent on telling man very clearly that this is her own special demesne. To low-standing animals like the carnivora, the thick bush offers but little impediment; they can not only slip with ease through the grass and undergrowth beneath the level of the lower branches of the trees and bushes, but have an excellent view along the lower plane. Antelopes brush through the most prohibitive-looking break of thorns as though it did not exist. Man, however, is in quite other case. His upright method of progression inhibits from his gaze all but a dense impenetrable-looking tangle of branches, leaves, and thorns. His field of view is often restricted to a few yards, while his own legs and the lower part of his body are clearly visible at quite long distances to creatures whose eyes are on a lower level. Then his tender skin and his cloth garments are neither of them of much service in protecting him from wounds, should he endeavour to make reckless plunges, as he is tempted to do, for instance, when eager to get a second shot at his game. At every turn he is forcibly reminded of his natural limitations. There are few exercises more exhausting than moving through thick and trackless thorn-bush on a hot day. Now and then it may perhaps be possible to take temporary advantage of a game track, but made as these are usually, by impala and kudu, creatures which by preference seek out the very thickest covert they can find, they are seldom of enduring help.

At length, stooping and crawling, and occasionally, it is to be feared, using reprehensible language, we catch a glimpse of the yellow sand forming the bed of the nearly dry watercourse. Caution now! A hook thorn impaling the lobe of the right ear must not evoke even a whisper. With softly treading feet and carefully selected steps we thread our way through the rest of the intervening thicket, rifle ready, every sense alert, the trackers relegated to a few paces in rear.

With shrill, grating protests a brace of francolins suddenly rise almost at our feet, and whir away, still rending the air with their entirely superfluous cries of alarm, to find refuge from the fancied danger in the patch of dense bush across the stream-bed. It is all up with our chance of surprise if our quarry is anywhere at hand. For a second or two we stand still, hardly daring to breathe; and then the tension relaxes: everything is silent: nothing has happened. Before us stretches the thirty feet of sand, winding away out of sight to right and left, inter-

spersed here and there with patches of reeds and jutting rocks; thickly imprinted with the nightly tracks of multitudes of animals. We breathe a sigh of relief, for, if hunting dogs were in the neighbourhood and alarmed, they would scarcely have failed to give us some indication thereof. So we descend with less caution into the stream-bed, and begin hunting about for fresh tracks. Very interesting it is to spell out the goings and comings as written in these sand-spruits. Of course far the greater number of footmarks are those of impala; but here and there a line of deeper imprints, crossing straight from bank to bank, evidences the passage of a herd of sable or of waterbuck. Here a leopard has prowled last night, moving stealthily along the sand close under one of the banks. Here has gone a civet, and these curious hand-like impressions can belong only to an ant-bear, most secretive of all mammals. Fifty yards farther on, Jase calls attention to a line of great deep footmarks, showing in the soft sand as little more than round pits, but not to be mistaken for any but the tracks of one of our few remaining rhinos. Not a trace of the animals we are after. Steamela says he knows there is a waterhole about half a mile up stream, and suggests our going thither, since, even should we not find our game, we can at least satisfy our thirst. We will not, however, take the most obvious route up the stream-bed, but, plunging once more into the bush, will make a circuit, and come to the spot with the wind once more in our favour.

Twenty minutes of struggling with the bush brings us near our goal, and we resume all our previous precautions. This time there are no vigilant francolins on guard, and just as, very cautiously, we emerge on to the few yards of open bank which slope down to a small discoloured pool in the sand, shaded by a big rock from much of the sun's rays, a sudden raucous half bark, half growl, comes from the middle of a big patch of reeds forty yards away. Instantly following, a large dark form springs out on to the sand, and as it stands rigid for a moment, a bullet rolls it over. At the crack of the rifle the whole bed of the watercourse beyond the reeds is in a moment swarming with confusedly leaping, hoarsely growling shapes. The majority of the pack, sound asleep until awakened by the shot, have, for the moment, no idea from which side to apprehend the danger, and bound frantically first one way and then another. One animal, indeed, rushes blindly up the bank straight towards us, and meets a bullet at little more than ten paces. The magazine is quickly emptied. Deliberate shooting is impossible: the whole pack is a whirling constantly changing mass of kaleidoscopic movement. Only for a few moments, however. Some older animal probably gives the cue, and in a twinkling all dash up

the opposite bank, to be instantly lost to sight in the forest. The whole incident has occupied but a few seconds; but we have got in our six shots, and three marauders lie stretched on the sand, while according to the natives at least one other went off distinctly the worse for wear. In this kind of shooting it is inevitable that there must be a certain amount of wildness; but, on the other hand, a bullet now and then finds more than one billet. Acquaintance with the habits of the animals urges no waste of time, and hastily refilling the magazine we rush down the bank, and through the sand, hard on their tracks. Reckless of torn garments and lost hat, we force our way through the opposing barrier of thorns and creepers, and emerging 150 yards farther on at the edge of a small open space, find the whole pack halted and looking back, just on the opposite side. Our appearance is the signal for a chorus of warning barks and a swift retrograde movement; there is just time for one shot. Breathless from running, and with the perspiration streaming into the eyes, it is not a very steady one; in fact, as we pull the trigger, the muzzle of the rifle is describing quite large circles, and therefore it is sheer luck that on the report one of the nearest animals spins round quickly several times before plunging away after his companions. It looks as if one of his legs may have been broken. Anyhow it will be pure waste of time to hurry after them any more. This pack has been hunted a good deal lately by the rangers in its passage through their various sections, and will be on the alert for some considerable time after having once been disturbed in this manner. However it is very hot, and since their stomachs are full from their long morning's hunting, it is quite likely that if they think they are not being pursued they may settle down in some convenient spot a mile or two on. We therefore return to the stream-bed, where our followers have dragged together the bodies of the fallen.

Gaunt, leggy animals, the males often standing nearly thirty inches at the shoulder, hunting dogs are blotched all over with irregularly shaped patches of yellow, black, and white—individuals showing a preponderance sometimes of one colour and sometimes of another. There is practically always a white tip at the end of the bushy tail. The ears are upstanding, nearly round, and of very large size proportionately to the whole animal. The head is rather short, but the jaw powerful, and furnished with a formidable array of long and sharp teeth. There is but little resemblance to our domestic canine friend, either in outward appearance or in natural characteristics, and the term "dog" is little descriptive of the animal. He droops away so markedly from shoulder to tail that one of the earliest colloquial designations conferred upon him was that of

"hyæna dog." The structural detail which separates him most markedly from all the tribes of true dogs, wolves, jackals, and foxes, is that he possesses only four toes to each foot: there are no dew claws. Other differences exist, but the above is that which most readily strikes the observer at first sight. The African Hunting Dog is accordingly classed in a genus by himself, and has no very near relations now existing. The males, generally speaking (not always), seem to be darker than the other sex, that is to say, the black in the coat covers a proportionately larger area than either the yellow or the white. The hunting dogs of Northern Africa are, generally speaking, darkly coloured throughout, and are exceeded in size by their almost tawny coloured relatives from Cape Colony. Beyond this it is almost hopeless to endeavour to divide them into sub-species from external markings alone. In my experience hardly any two members of the same pack are marked precisely alike, and the white tag at the end of the tail varies in extent from monopolising nearly the whole of that member to occupying the tiniest space at the extreme end: indeed I have seen more than one animal devoid of any white tag at all.

Seeing that it will be as well to leave our friends some time in which to forget their alarm, the skinning of the fallen is proceeded with. Museums are glad to have the skins for purposes of study and comparison, for, until quite recently, but few found their way to civilisation for the inspection of science, the ordinary hunter paying but little attention to these unremunerative though otherwise interesting creatures. Observe the strong odour. It is always easy to recognise where a pack has been lying for at least half an hour after its departure; and when the atmosphere is moist and humid, even the human olfactory sense suffices to track it. The odour is strong and harsh, neither "foxy" nor "doggy," but a distinct brand of itself, never to be mistaken for anything else when it has been once inhaled. Carcasses have to be skinned soon after death and in the shade; otherwise the thin outer tegument, to which the hairs are attached, quickly peels off and shrivels under the sun's rays, and thus the specimen is spoiled. Neither the chase nor the skinning of the hunting dog is work in which the natives, to put it mildly, take any violent interest: they do not, at least in these parts, eat the flesh of any canines, and the skins have never been regarded as of the slightest value. Nevertheless, it is a mistake to imagine that the latter are always bare and mangy-looking. It is true that in a very old animal the hair on the face and on much of the body is worn very short, but at this time of year the majority of the coats are glossy and in fine condition.

The skinning process con-

sumes nearly an hour, and then the pelts, rolled tightly up, tied firmly with bark rope, are slung like a bundle of clothes on the point of Jase's assagai. It is the best that can be done, for we may not be within miles of this spot again.

On the resumption of the chase there is no difficulty in following the tracks of the quickly-moving pack, either through long grass or over stony ground. About two miles on lies another deeply cut valley, running parallel to that from which we have just emerged, and shepherding the own brother of the little dried-up streamlet contained by the latter. The tracks lead us over a pile of large rocky boulders, almost hidden by long rank grass. Suddenly there comes a quick rustle, and straight across our front, his crest raised a full three feet from the ground, undulates the long sinuous body of a black mamba, deadliest snake in Africa. Moving faster than a man can run, the little wicked-looking head swaying gracefully from side to side with each movement of the body, he makes all haste to shelter. His movements are all easy and graceful, but it is well when they take him away from, and not towards, the traveller. Woe betide the unhappy man or beast that happens to get in the way of a black mamba rushing for his hole. His speed is so great that it is almost impossible to clear his path in time to avoid the lightning stroke which he delivers in passing, and should he get his blow home, the action of the poison is so rapid that there are few recorded instances of recovery from its effects.

While still three hundred yards from the belt of dense bush bordering the stream-bed we hear the well-known growls of alarm, and get just one momentary glimpse of a single disappearing white tail tag. Running and scrambling through the bush as fast as possible, we arrive on the bank of the spruit in time to see this last animal crossing a few hundred yards below. He is hopping and limping, and is obviously one of the wounded ones. We refrain from firing, not from any element of compassion, but because at the moment we are immovably held in the embraces of a protruding branch of wait-a-bit. Each thorn has to be separately unhitched, and no sooner is one limb free than another is seized in vice-like grip. We are reduced to calling for assistance, and even after the arrival of our attendants, it is a couple of minutes before we are free. Truly a case of "more haste, less speed." Perhaps on the whole the delay and loss of the shot were not really misfortunes. There exists among hunting dogs a certain spirit of comradeship, which prompts them to hang about to allow a disabled companion to keep up with them. This is a trait often of benefit to the hunter who keeps it in mind, since it is quite likely to prove the means of securing

him opportunities for shots at other members of the pack, which otherwise he might lack. Solaced by this reflection, we presently follow on steadily, and in about half a mile come on the wounded beast standing under a thick bush. Half a dozen others are about thirty yards farther on. By dint of a little careful creeping under cover we manage to get near enough unobserved for a long shot, and by luck succeed in dropping another animal. This happens once or twice more, the wounded one, obviously weakening, letting us get a little nearer each time before he rushes off. At last the pack apparently decides to abandon him to his fate, and deliberately, I am convinced, turns down wind. The wind at his back, the case of the hunter becomes a hopeless one, for he is bound to be detected long before he can get a view, and farther to pursue the chase is merely to court repeated and aggravated disappointment.

The last hour since the halt has been all hard and fast work, and it is pleasant to sit down at the edge of a small clearing, a thicket at our back to defend us from the still powerful rays of the afternoon sun. Clouds are beginning to bank up in the south and west, and now and then we can catch the very faint and distant rumbling of thunder. Our followers are divided in opinion, for while Jase thinks we shall not get a storm before night, Steamela is of the opinion that it will be on us by sundown. Jase is the elder, but Steamela says his father was a rain-maker, so presumably he should be an authority on meteorological questions.

Very little four-footed game has been seen in the course of the day. The passage of a pack of hunting dogs has a far-reaching effect in scattering and disturbing other mammalian life: such few animals as have been noticed have seemed restless and scared, glancing timidly about, and prone to sudden and unjustified panics. Presently, however, from out of the shelter of a thicket a little duiker picks his dainty way, glances nervously around, and begins to nibble at some young shoots. A slight noise, and with one swift bound he has disappeared from sight.

Steamela touches us very lightly on the shoulder. Following his fixed gaze, and careful not to make the slightest movement, we see something moving through the bush on our right. Another second discloses a pair of hunting dogs, one behind the other, making their way straight in our direction. They are no doubt a detachment from the main body, on their way to join it after a hunt on their own account. Quite unsuspicious of danger, they jog along at hounds' pace, and walk, alternately, glancing about with the alertness distinctive of all wild animals, but, like the rest, apparently slow to recognise the presence of any being which does not move, and which they have not winded. Something startles one of them, and he springs round,

staring steadily in our direction. He takes another step forward, not yet fully alarmed, and perhaps anxious to obtain a clearer view. Even this slight movement is suggestive of power: the long sinewy legs act as if set on well-oiled springs, and every muscle of the body seems set in harmony. A quick growl shows us identified, and the shot rings out concurrently with the simultaneous leap of the two animals. The nearest is struck in the midst of his first bound, and rolls over and over; a second bullet knocks up the dirt just short of his mate, who affords no second chance. The stricken one struggles to his feet and is making off also; but Jase and Steamela are upon him in a moment, and dispatch him, unresisting, with a few deft blows from their knobsticks, to the accompaniment of a torrent of abuse.

"Awo, take that, you that kill all our game! And that also. Now you will kill no more!" (Jase was a noted poacher himself before, and on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief he was invested with the halo of respectability which surrounds Government employ.)

Walking to the spot we find an old male, very dark in colour, the skin almost bare in places: the great ears are raw, and bleeding at the edges from the attentions of the multitudes of grass-ticks which hang on them in clusters. His long sharp teeth show no sign of age, however, and his stomach is distended almost to bursting-point with freshly bolted meat. "I wonder how many buck you have pulled down in your life; and how and where you got that old scar, nearly from shoulder to flank." The "boys" look up inquiringly. "No, never mind about the skin." It is high time to think of home, from which at least seven weary miles separate us, even allowing for the short cuts which it will be possible to take. The tramp homewards is always a long one. Hope and excitement curtail the miles on the outward way; but, tired and the sport at an end, the return journey is always a disagreeable ordeal to face. I recollect once asking a native whether it was far to a certain place. "Well," he replied, "if it is the cool of the morning, and you are fresh and strong and unburdened, it is not very far; but if it is hot, and you are tired and carrying a big load, it is a very long way." I think this rather sums up most tropical bush marching.

Big purply clouds with serrated edges have already piled themselves up over half the sky. Feathery shreds of vapour, torn by the wind, are driving first in one direction and then in another. The thunder is rolling nearer, and flickers of lightning can be seen against the ominous blue-black background. Nature is clearly on the point of shaking herself free from the trammelling heat of the past week, and the process is going to be no gentle

one. We shall catch it whatever we do, but it is best to be caught as near home as possible. "So hurry up, my lads. Steamela, you have inherited your father's gift of prophecy! And for goodness' sake leave that unfortunate tortoise alone; you have plenty of meat for to-night without it; if we delay longer we shall never arrive at all."

We have covered little more than half the distance homewards when there comes a faint sighing in the tree-tops, and a sharp puff of air from the south fans our cheeks. It is warm air at first, but the second gust, a moment or two later, is perceptibly cooler. These are the farthest advanced patrols of the storm. Far away can be heard its approaching roar. The tree-tops on the distant horizon wave frantically, and then, blotted out in a grey mist, are no more seen. Around us is once more a dead calm. Then all in a moment there is a mighty rushing, and with a roar and a leap the storm is upon us. A blinding lightning flash dazzles the eyes, and the following thunder-crash is so hard on its tracks as to appear simultaneous. A big marula-tree is for a moment enveloped in a sheet of flame, and then down comes one of the great limbs, its rending and tearing lost in the rage of other sounds. Dust, leaves, stones, and branches fly frantically to leeward before the blast. The thunder is only one long nerve-shaking roar, and the flashes of lightning follow one another so fast that they appear combined in a single flickering glare. Wind and thunder are barely distinguishable in their combined tumult. Not a drop of rain yet. We have just managed in the nick of time to crawl under a luckily situated overhanging bank, which affords room enough for the three of us to crouch together close up against the windward side. We shall be able to see the worst out from its comparative shelter, and it was a great piece of good fortune to have happened on it when we did.

There is a momentary and partial lull in the scourge of the wind. Instantly comes a pattering on the leaves, followed by that peculiar smell which arises from parched ground after it has sucked up the first few drops of moisture. A few minutes more, and then down comes the rain in one great blinding sheet, at first, as it strikes the dry earth, causing gouts of mud to rebound; then triumphing, sweeping the whole surface, it carries all the obstructions of dead sticks and leaves away in little rivulets, which before long are magnified into miniature torrents. Our sheltering bank serves to stave off the full fury of the elements, but cascades of water are now falling from its overhanging brow, the moisture is trickling down between shirt and skin, and we crouch in an ever-deepening pool of water. The first violence of the wind has abated, but it still blows in great gusts, driving the rain furiously

at a sharp angle. But this is not the worst. A sharp stinging sensation, and we flatten ourselves still more against the bank for protection against the hailstones, which at first come mingled with the rain, and then altogether supplant it. They descend like showers of shrapnel bullets, their rattle among the trees heard above the now lessening voices of wind and thunder. Some of the stones are as big as pigeon's eggs, solid lumps of ice. A jackal, driven from his shelter of long grass by this last visitation, comes tearing madly along, draggled and terrified, in search of some friendly hole. Half blinded he almost rushes into us, and only at the last moment, becoming aware of human presence, reluctantly turns aside and disappears. The birds and such smaller mammals as have not sought timely shelter must be in sad case. Duikers and even bushbucks are often found lying dead after these storms, so great is the force and weight of the hailstones.

Fortunately these violent storms are usually as short as they are sharp. The thunder after a few more earth-shaking roars begins finally to draw away. The rain, too, no longer driven before the wind, settles into a steady downpour, and in fact in ten minutes or so it will be possible to make a start for home. It is nearly dark as we plunge out into the rain. Squish, squash, we tramp through the mud. Jase takes the lead, and holds aside the dripping branches for his master to pass. It is not an inspiriting moment. Quite apart from the present watery state of affairs, bush walking in the dark is always disagreeable. The little hook thorns, difficult enough to avoid even by day, are of course now quite invisible. Perhaps most trying of all are the knee-high thorn bushes and growers, which are constantly being walked over or into. We fall over concealed logs and jutting fragments of rock. Creepers and long grass weave themselves like sentient animals round the legs, greatly retarding movement. Progress seems, and in fact is, terribly slow. Frogs croak everywhere. To them, at any rate, all is as it should be, nor do they lose the opportunity of proclaiming it to the world at large. Here and there groups of animals, indistinguishable in the darkness, dash and splash off at our approach. A lion begins calling in deep guttural grunts a mile or two away, and is presently answered by his mate. A dark wet night such as this promises to be is favourable to the work they have in hand, for it enables them to creep upon their victims, huddled together for warmth and shelter, with the minimum risk of discovery. The storm is roaring away far to the north now, but it continues to rain steadily, and it is becoming so dark that it is barely possible to see Jase walking a few paces in front. Other sounds begin to mingle with the light sibilant murmur of the rain, some of them in-

definite in character, others more easily recognisable. A jackal barks weirdly close at hand, and then faintly comes from far away the howl of a hyæna, repeated at intervals, as the big scavenger, having emerged perhaps from the hole where he has been sheltering himself, sets out on his nightly prowl.

In due course we come to one of the dry spruits crossed in the morning. It is rushing down now, with much fuss and turmoil, too deep to ford, and with a span of ten yards from bank to bank. It is quite impossible to get over here. So there ensues a long weary detour, through dense bush and long drenched reeds and grass, until perhaps a mile up a place is found where, with some difficulty, we manage to cross, the water knee-deep. A white man alone would be in hopeless case, but our local "boys" are never at a loss concerning the way, seldom even for a short cut.

And so stumbling and splashing, but always plodding steadily on, we can at length discern a faint gleam of light shining through the rain. A few minutes more bring us to the banks of the Sabi. Surely never were benighted wayfarers more thankful. The river is but little affected by the recent storm. It takes more than twelve hours for the water to come down from even the foothills, and though, if the rain has been general, to-morrow may see the river rushing in full flood, at present a rise of a few inches is all that the discharge of the local tributaries has been able to effect. Although we had rather anticipated this from previous experience, the realisation comes as a relief nevertheless. The possibility of being cut off by a hundred yards of foaming torrent from shelter and food, and of having to spend such a night as this in the bush, has been rather haunting us for the last half hour. However, all is well that ends well; lights soon appear on the opposite bank in response to our shouts, and we cross without further misadventure.

A COMPLETE ELIZABETHAN GENTLEMAN.

"THIS Robert Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, was a complete gentleman in all suitable employments, an exact seaman, a good navigator, an excellent architect, mathematician, physician, and what not. He was a handsome, personable man, tall of stature, red-haired, and of admirable comport, and above all noted for riding the great horse for tilting and for being the first of all that taught a dog to sit in order to catch partridges." If any man now sees a bathos in this progression from great arts and sciences to the high horse and the training of setters, so did not Carlo Dudley when he atoned for having been the family scamp and the plague of his father's life by giving him this noble character to Anthony Wood in 1673. It was much that Sir Robert had been seaman, navigator, architect, mathematician, physician, and what not. It was more that he was a personable man and of admirable comport. But it was above all that he was well in place on the great horse, and was master of all the accomplishments of the complete gentleman.

Sir Robert cannot be said to be a wholly forgotten man. He was the central personage of a once loud and long-drawn-out scandal, and that was enough to secure him a safe immortality of a sort. He could not be overlooked in Mr Craik's 'Romance of the Peerage,' and he was entitled to attention in the Lisle title case. Mr Adlard dealt with him in an appendix to his 'Amy Robsart.' Two Englishmen in Italy, Mr Thomas Vaughan and Mr Leader, have studied him, and his voyage to the West Indies has earned for him a full notice by Mr Warner in the publications of the Hakluyt Society. And he deserved it all, partly for what he did, but more for what he was and what he represented.

No words need be wasted over the very transparent mystery of his birth. He was, according to the testimony of the most credible witnesses, the son of Douglas Sheffield, widow of the second Lord Sheffield, and sister of the Lord High Admiral Howard Effingham, and of Elizabeth's Earl of Leicester. If any one wishes to read of secret marriages, alleged and denied, of the Queen's jealousy, and of Leicester's falsity, together with poisonings carried out at the Earl's orders, by his body physician and poisoner-of-all-work, the Italian Doctor and Socinian refugee Giulio Borgarucci, he will find matter to his taste in the pages of Mr Craik and the other writers named. We may take it for granted that the boy was born at 'Sheen on the 7th August 1574. He had his mother's word for it. We are constrained to believe that Leicester was for once telling

the truth when he said that his son was "base." The story is ugly, and teaches nothing of more value than the dreary lesson that the courtiers of Queen Elizabeth were no better in the way of impudent and callous immorality than the Court of Charles II.

Lady Sheffield married Sir Edward Stafford, Ambassador to France, after Leicester had deserted her and had taken to wife Lettice Devereux, widow of the first Earl of Essex. Leicester did not shirk his responsibility. He took charge of the boy, saw to his education, and treated him openly as his heir when that "noble imp," Lord Denbigh, his only legitimate child, died. Robert was entered at Christ Church as "the son of an Earl," and was with his father at headquarters during the Armada year. In 1589 Leicester died, not without the inevitable but doubtless quite ungrounded suspicion of poison. By his will written by himself, with great precision, and in excellent English, he left his base son (for so he is careful to name him) well provided for. He was to have a pension at once, and to enter into possession of Kenilworth, together with more manors and leases than one has the patience to name, whenever his uncle, Ambrose Dudley, the Earl of Warwick, should die. And then there were other manors, leases, and houses to come to him at the death of the Countess.

"Qui terre a guerre a." Young Dudley was soon fighting with the Dowager Countess. The poor woman had been left executrix and intrusted with the whole responsibility for winding up Leicester's affairs, which were in confusion. He owed, as he confessed in his will, he knew not how many thousands more than twenty thousand pounds. The lad had need of his uncle the Lord High Admiral and other friends at Court to protect him against the forcible entry of the Countess and her new husband, Christopher Blount, into Kenilworth. It is characteristic of the Court of Elizabeth that Howard of Effingham, brother of the betrayed and deserted Douglas Sheffield, did not feel the stain on his family honour as a wound. He accepted his nephew, though the story of his birth was a secret of the housetops. He remained "the noble friend" of Leicester to the last, and was invited in his will to act as the adviser of the Countess Lettice. With his connections the natural place of young Dudley was at Court. Biographers have speculated on the influence which the scientific leanings of his Oxford tutor, Thomas Chaloner, may have had on him. But Dudley can have seen little of Oxford, and the Court included many who were well qualified to encourage his natural inclination to shipbuilding and chemistry. If we can trust a document he thought fit to produce in later years, he must have looked upon himself as *hors de page* in 1591; for in that year he bound himself by "verba de presenti et mutuum

consensum" to Mistress Frances Vavassor. But that document is dubious testimony. It purports to be a copy of Letters Testimonial sworn before a notary public on the 30th November 1592 by Thomas Jobson and Thomas Combley. But in November 1592 Frances Vavassor had been married for a year to the eldest of the remarkable Sherley brothers. Jobson and Combley were men who sailed with Dudley to the West Indies in 1594—and the copy was produced in Italy when he had good reason for trying to prove that he was not well and truly married when he left England in 1604. Lying and the concoction of false documents were not held to be incompatible with the character of the complete Elizabethan gentleman. Robert Dudley was not more scrupulous than others, on his own showing. In October 1591 a news-letter writer, whose letter is preserved at Hatfield, could report that "Mr Dudley was forbidden the Court for kissing Mistress Candishe in the presence, being his wife as is said." Who was deceived here? That Dudley married a sister or cousin (for there is a doubt which she was) of the circumnavigator Thomas Cavendish or Candishe, is matter of record. If he had precontracted himself to Frances Vavassor and was thereby debarred from marrying another woman, it follows that he inherited more from Leicester than lands and leases.

Maritime adventure and speculation in privateering voyages held a foremost place in the interests of the Elizabethans. Dudley needed no further stimulus to turn his mind to them than that which he could have breathed in the air of the Court and the City. But if any one man more than another drew him to what was to be a guiding influence of his life, that man was Thomas Cavendish. The circumnavigator had spent the booty brought back from his voyage in 1588 like a sailor. He was soon planning another venture for the wealth of the Spaniard in the South Seas. His own money had been scattered profusely. The second venture, in which he died miserably enough in 1592, was fitted out by the help of loans. Dudley was apparently the chief creditor, for he took out letters of administration of Cavendish's estate, and the two ships which came back from the failure were handed over to him by the Council. He would have been poor-spirited indeed if the fate of his friend had deterred him from trying his fortune on the sea. The memory of Cavendish's first success was sure to overbear the more recent proof that the gold which glittered in the South Seas was surrounded by protecting dangers. Many were straining for the prize. In 1593 Richard Hawkins sailed on the voyage which ended disastrously in the Bay of San Mateo. Dudley was preparing to follow him, but was forbidden by the Queen to go to the South Seas. Yet he had her leave to sail else-

where, and in 1594 he preceded Raleigh to Trinidad and the Spanish Main.

The voyage does not rank among the great adventures of the Elizabethan age. He himself, though not disposed to underrate his own achievements, thought but little of it. He even dismissed it in the laconic account he gave to Hakluyt as being one of those things so commonly done as not to be worth mention. If the others were like his, we can understand why Sir William Monson said that most voyages to the West Indies proved unprofitable. Dudley and his three ships did not meet with disaster, but they found nobody to fight and no prizes of value to take. Captain Wyatt, who commanded his main body of pikes, and who wrote a much longer account, is loud in praise of his noble young commander. But there were few Spaniards in Trinidad, and they were poor. On the Main the settlements were even smaller. Wages, time, and health wore away, and nothing was done because there was nothing to do except to take formal possession of Trinidad. This Dudley did, and perhaps that is why we possess a rather bad-blooded reference to him in one of Raleigh's letters to Robert Cecil. His prior claim might have proved to be a bone in Sir Walter's throat. On the way home Sir Robert had a set-to with a "Biskayner," whom he could not take, but whom he was glad to think he left in a sinking state. We do not possess the "Biskayner's" version of the story. It might give a different colour to the encounter. Captain Wyatt is our witness that Dudley displayed high spirit in the affair. On his return he spoke of himself cheerfully in a letter to Robert Cecil as a "plain sailor," and he continued to send out ships on ventures which it is to be feared did not prove more profitable than this had been.

Dudley was now home again, none the richer for his cruise. Yet he had played the man, and had won his place among the gentlemen who were fit to be employed in the wars. He took his share and won his knighthood in the expedition to Cadiz in 1595, and was in the unsuccessful attempt to save Calais from the Spaniards. That share was not so considerable as he was tempted to picture it in later life, but he was there in a creditable way. He also earned the Queen's bounty for building a ship of force. His wife had died before 1596, and in that year he married Alicia Leigh, daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh of Stoneleigh, a Warwickshire neighbour. A Mr Thomas Leigh of Stoneleigh had been one of the Warwickshire gentlemen ordered by the Council in 1590 to protect Dudley against the forcible entry of Sir Christopher Blount and the Countess of Leicester. Seven daughters, of whom four grew up, were born of that marriage before Sir Robert violated it by his own act in 1605. In the last days of the Queen there was a possibility that it might have

been cut short by the headsman's axe. Sir Robert was by instinct one of the martial men who swarmed round his commander in the Cadiz expedition, the Earl of Essex. That Essex was the son of his old enemy, the Countess Lettice, who, as he was soon to endeavour to prove, had helped to wrong his mother grossly, and had undoubtedly tried to deprive him of Kenilworth, would have been no reason why he should not join the Earl in his foolish adventure. By luck or some other cause Sir Robert's connection with Essex brought him nothing worse than a brief confinement in the Tower, and he escaped mounting the scaffold with Christopher Blount. That within four years he was an exile for the rest of his life was not due to participation in political conspiracies. He fled the country, and his wife, after failing to prove the legitimacy of his birth, but perhaps because he had fallen in love, wholeheartedly, for the first time.

The legitimacy case of Sir Robert Dudley is one of those conglomerations of hard-swearing, contradictions, pathos, and irrelevancies which are irresistible to the solver of mysteries. As the Star Chamber of evil memory intervened roughly, and imposed silence on the parties, there has always been a plausible excuse for alleging that injustice was done. Injustice there would have been —to the Countess of Leicester —if Sir Robert had succeeded. The Star Chamber is entitled to reasonable fair-play, and in this case common-sense, which will not be blinded by sentiment and suppositions, has to allow that it was right in its judgment. It showed itself polite when it excused Sir Robert's action on the ground that he had been misled by one Drury, of unsavoury reputation. Drury, a "Knight of the Post"—*i.e.*, professional false witness and sharper — had escaped the Council's claws by a well-timed natural death. Persons of more consequence than Drury had egged Sir Robert on, if he needed egging. It would, in view of what was about to happen, be rash to conclude that his wife had any influence on him, but she appears, from many indications, to have been a gentlewoman with a great deal of proper pride, who would much rather have been Countess of Leicester and of Warwick than plain Dame Alicia Dudley. Her family would certainly have preferred to see her wearing the more exalted titles. When Dudley began his attempt to prove his legitimacy in May 1603, he was at his father-in-law's house, Stoneleigh. The straightforward course would have been to apply to the House of Lords. But Dudley took an indirect way. He applied for a commission to examine witnesses from the Court of Audience at Canterbury, and then in September he brought a flamingly collusive action in the Consistory Court at Lichfield against one Buswell for calling him bastard. These proceedings could not be

concealed from the Countess Lettice. They aimed at nothing less than reducing her from wife to mistress, and thereby stripping her of her jointure. It was a matter of course that she would defend herself, and Sir Robert's friends were very negligent if they did not remind him that the mother of the Earl of Essex would be sure of the good will of King James. They and he apparently forgot this essential fact. They were rewarded by learning that the Star Chamber had descended upon them. If anybody is to be pitied at this point of the case, then our sympathies ought to go to Sir Robert's mother, now and for many years past the wife of Sir Edward Stafford. The poor lady was put in a most ignominious dilemma. She must either confess that she had not been married to Leicester, or that she committed bigamy when she married Sir Edward Stafford. The Dudleys appear to have ignored the existence of Sir Edward, who was still alive. He died in 1604, but he had time to make a deposition, which is certainly entitled to as much credit as any other statement made in the case. It was to the effect that after his marriage Queen Elizabeth made him "importune his weif whether theare were a contracte betweene her and the Erle of Leicester, which if it were, then she would make him make upp her honour with marriage or rot in the Tower, and would better the estate of Stafforde. She answered with greate vowes, greif, and passion that she had trusted the said Earle too much to have anything to show to constraine him to marry her. The like she did to the Queene, and the like to the Erle of Sussex; and that she had tould Stafford the trueth before she married him." It is only too plain that she did not tell the truth in 1603, when she said she had been secretly married to Leicester at Sheen. If she had, she would not have sworn that the marriage was promoted by her cousin, the Duke of Norfolk, whose head had been taken off nearly a year before! The Star Chamber may very properly have been impressed by the fact that Lady Stafford did not pretend that her brother the Admiral, now Earl of Nottingham, had been told of her marriage in 1573. Yet he was her natural supporter, and one finds it difficult to believe that if she had insisted on marriage, the gentleman who commanded against the Armada would have done less for her than old Sir Francis Knollys did for his daughter the Countess of Essex. Sir Francis had taken care that there should be no doubt in her case. On one side was probability and such evidence as was available; on the other were improbability, contradictions, defects of evidence, and some pretty manifest perjury. At a much later date, in 1644, Charles I. was persuaded to grant the title of Duchess Dudley to Lady Dudley. The patent contains a very odd confession that King James

had been misled and that Dudley had had hard measure. But in 1644 King Charles was not at leisure to give his mind to the examination of the story. The Solicitor-General who drew the patent, Holbourne, was Lady Dudley's son-in-law, and then Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick, who held one of the titles Sir Robert Dudley claimed, was the Admiral who commanded for the Parliament. In 1605, when the Star Chamber gave its judgment, it could not have decided otherwise than it did—that Dudley's claim was unfounded. The papers were impounded and sealed, and the parties were forbidden to move further in the matter.

A sober-minded man would now have settled down to make the best of what was after all a very tolerable position. By accepting defeat and applying himself to render good service to the King, he might have persuaded James, who was amenable to attentions, to create him Earl of Leicester or of Warwick. But then, if he had been a sober-minded man that is the course he would have taken from the beginning. And he was an Elizabethan of the stamp of the Sherley brothers, and many more,—a man who must be playing a part, and that no commonplace one. In June of 1605 he applied for a licence to travel abroad—and went, accompanied by Mistress Elizabeth Southwell, his cousin, a maid of honour, and one of the most beautiful women in England in the dress of a page. The elopement of Mistress Southwell caused no small commotion. Orders were given, too late, to close the ports. The Governor of Calais was begged as a favour to arrest the lady and send her back. He did arrest her, but Mistress Southwell held the common faith of her generation—that all lies told to deceive an enemy are pardonable. She assured the Governor that she had escaped from heretic England in order to be free to enter a convent. He could not oppose so pious an intention, and the lady was allowed to go with Dudley to Lyons. Both avowed themselves Roman Catholics, and at Lyons they were married.

Dudley had now put what had all the appearance of being impassable barriers between himself and his country. His perversion had subjected him to the penal laws, and the recently passed Act of James I. had made it felony to commit bigamy. The King's pardon could cover a great deal, but it could not rid him of his wife Alicia, or of her legal claims on him. And then the pardon must be earned. Dudley looked about for a refuge. Italy fascinated the men of his time, and it had now become his natural abiding-place. A convert of his position was best placed near the Pope. It is true that he had given the Holy Father some cause for offence. He had applied for a dispensation to marry his cousin, but he had not confessed that he had left a wife behind. The ambiguous Letters

Testimonial were probably concocted about this time for the purpose of persuading the Pope that his marriage with Alicia Leigh was vitiated by a precontract to Frances Vavassor. The truth was beginning to be known, and his marriage at Lyons might have been pronounced irregular. As a matter of fact, Dudley was a convert who might be useful to the Church, and it was therefore not too particular to inquire into the worth of his excuses. If fidelity to one woman is any palliation of lack of faith to another, then Dudley might plead his faith to Elizabeth Southwell as an extenuating circumstance. Their honour rooted in dishonour stood, but to one another they were unimpeachably loyal till death parted them after many years.

If Dudley was bound to stand well with the Pope, it was also absolutely necessary for him to find a "potent" prince whom he could serve with acceptance. The Grand Dukes of Tuscany offered themselves to him as natural patrons. The Medici of his day—Cosmo, and after him Ferdinand—were not like their successors, princes who merely reigned and hunted. They governed and they improved. It was the peculiar good fortune of Sir Robert that the Grand Dukes were intent on developing the commerce of their dominions by creating a good port at Leghorn, and on defending their subjects against the Turks and the Barbary pirates. They had even a disposition to take some share in trade with America. A gentleman who had made one sea-voyage, had seen some service at sea, who had an intelligent interest in shipbuilding, and, in what was then regarded as a part of naval science, the fortification of ports, might hope to be employed by them. That he was of noble descent would be all to his advantage. Even if his birth was illegitimate, it was not adulterine, for his father was unmarried and his mother a widow. Dudley betook himself to Florence and presented the Grand Duke with a long and very flourishing account of his life and capacity. It is in French, for he had still, strangely enough, no knowledge of Italian. Whether the Grand Duke believed every word Dudley said to him must be doubtful. He certainly believed a good part, for he took this handsome and interesting exile into his service, and gave him house, land, and pensions. Dudley was a conspicuous person in Tuscany till his death in 1649.

The extent of his services is not quite so clear to me as it is to his English biographers. Italian writers do not allow him all the credit his countrymen would give him for the construction of the port and fortifications of Leghorn and the draining of the marshes of Pisa. I must confess to a certain suspicion that he owed no small part of the interest shown him by the Medici to the fact that he was supposed to have suffered for the Church, and to the kindness of the ladies

of the Grand Ducal family to him, to Elizabeth Southwell, and their twelve children. The best, if not the only, evidence we possess as to his practical faculty, are his invention of the "Warwick powders," a concoction which looks to the unscientific eye a horrible quack medicine; the proposal for a warship which he sent to Henry, Prince of Wales; and the colossal *Arcano del Mare*.

It is not lawful for a mere ignorant layman to speak of the medicine. As for the ship and the "Arcano" they are better within my reach. They leave on me the impression that Sir Robert was one of those renaissance men who combined a glowing ambition to do things on a great scale, with a lively imagination and much speculative ingenuity. The "gallizabra," as he called the vessel he proposed to Prince Henry, has much the look of one of those attempts to combine incompatible advantages which fascinate the inventor of more fancy than solid mechanical faculty. She was to have been of shallow draft, but high freeboard, and to have carried a heavy armament of guns of one-third less weight than the pieces then in use, but of equal calibre, strength, and range. She was to have been equally good to sail and to row. The whole draft is full of descriptions of things to be done, and of assurances that the writer can can do them if he is given an opportunity. To me it seems that the gallizabra would have been of very unstable stability, and that even if she did not turn turtle she would have gone to leeward in a good breeze, and would have drifted hopelessly in the channel currents. It is to be noted that one of the vessels he built for the Grand Duke proved unmanageable, and that he had to excuse himself by throwing the blame on the builder. Yet he did build ships which rendered good service.

The "Secret of the Sea" is a book to be approached with respect. In the three-volume edition of 1646-47 it is handsome, and the two-volume edition of 1661 is colossal in proportions. Both editions are full of fine copper-plate maps and pictures of instruments. As for the text, it appears to me to possess the one merit we would expect to find in the work of a man of comprehensive foreseeing imagination. Sir Robert was for doing all things largely and on a compacted plan. His is the first (I think it may safely be said the actual first) scheme for constructing a navy in classes of ships on uniform scales. He had in his mind the germs of the "line of battle" and its dependent services of frigates and sloops. His navigation does not go beyond what he had learnt from Davis and his own instructor Abraham Kendall. Nor could it well have gone further. All the world had known, at any rate since Gemma Frisius had written, that it would be easy to find the longitude if only you could carry with you a trustworthy timekeeper. Till Harrison con-

structed his chronometer little or no progress could be made. Galileo might have forestalled Harrison, but Sir Robert, a brilliant amateur of many interests, was not the man to bury himself in the long and patient labour needed for such a task.

The work he did for the Grand Duke did not absorb him wholly. He was engaged for years in attempts to procure his recall home on tolerable terms. When summoned back by King James on pain of forfeiture, he refused to come, and justified his refusal in a long letter of engaging impudence and exquisite unreason. He said that he could not see why he was to be blamed for marrying Elizabeth Southwell, when the Earl of Devonshire had just married Penelope Rich, though her husband Lord Rich was still alive. When we consider that Penelope had at any rate been separated regularly *a thoro et mensa*, though not *a vinculo*, that Devonshire was not a married man, and that the King had driven them both from Court, Sir Robert's plea looks more than desperate. Perhaps he was not quite serious. It was unthinkable that he could return as a mere penitent. His estates were encumbered by his father's debts. He had raised every penny he could when he went abroad. He would be subject to fine as a recusant if he returned. The King might abstain from levying them, and might save him from the punishment for felony. But who was to protect him from his wife whose jointure was charged on his lands? He could make peace with her only by renouncing Elizabeth Southwell, and to do that would have touched his honour too closely — and his love. If he went back it must be as a favourite and above the law.

The device he imagined for securing his recall on, to him, tolerable terms, is a very excellent example of how easy it is for a clever man to lose all sense of reality and to speculate "in a balloon." In 1612 he drew up a pamphlet to show King James how to bridle the "insolencies" of his Parliament. It was the simplest thing in the world; all the King had to do was to raise a body of troops, garrison the principal towns, disarm the whole population, and levy taxes in the intelligent way pointed out to him by Sir Robert. What the people of England were to be at while his scheme was being carried out, the exile at Florence did not condescend to consider. He forgot "the stomach of that people." The egregious proposal was sent to Sir David Fowlis to be laid before the King. What the King said about it when, if ever, he did see it, is not recorded. We may safely assume that King Jamie sent the man who brought "the ill-fangled platform" away with "a flea in his lug." It drifted into the possession of Sir Robert Cotton, who, being a collector of books and manuscripts, would of course collect any curiosity. If Dudley had a disinterested taste for causing mischief, he

must have watched the course of the torpedo he had launched into English politics with keen amusement. In 1628 the dishonest Secretary of Sir Robert Cotton, who is said to have been his natural son (for "the gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make whips to scourge us with"), gave a copy to the Parliamentary leaders, of whom Wentworth was then one. They made vigorous use of it, and poor Cotton saw his beloved library sequestered for a space, and was reduced from a plump, well-favoured gentleman to mere skin and bone by grief. Nor was that all, for when Wentworth had become Strafford, and the evil days were upon him, the copy of the pamphlet was found among his papers, and was produced as being his work.

If the proposal did harm to others it did not help Dudley. Perhaps on the contrary it only made King James more ready to grant the Earldom of Leicester to the Sydneys, and of Warwick to Lord Rich in 1618. The door was shut in Dudley's face, and shut with insult. He had used both titles in Italy, and this was a kind of branding as an impostor. The answer he made was thoroughly worthy of him. If they were to be ducks, he would be drake. The Grand Duchess was a sister of the Emperor Ferdinand, and was much his friend and patroness. With her help he persuaded the Emperor not to create him, but to recognise him as Duke of Northumberland. He went over the lesser honours of his father and uncle to the higher honours of his grandfather, who had been attainted and beheaded by Mary Tudor, and that honour he held by a good right within the Imperial Dominions. He wore it for the rest of his life and left it to his son and the grandson with whom the main line of the Dudleys ended in Italy. If he was not Duke of Northumberland at home, he was undeniably Duca di Nortombria in Italy.

He would have been well pleased to take a more practical revenge, and therefore he applied to the Pope to grant him letters of reprisal against English commerce in the Mediterranean. They were granted him, with the limitation that he must not attack Roman Catholics. I do not find that the Pope's letters of marque were put to practical use. Il Duca di Nortombria had to force the opposition of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who was by no means desirous of seeing English commerce frightened away from Leghorn, and who may have remembered that the King of England possessed a navy. Yet, Il Duca did not fail altogether of his revenge. Whether he threatened to become a nuisance, or because friends in England took pity on his case, he did in the end receive some compensation for his forfeited lands. In his later years he was in sufficiently easy circumstances to be able to marry four of his daughters into noble families, which implies that he could dower them. He built himself

a house in Florence, lived handsomely, and was sought after by the younger generation of English travellers, who were glad to hear him discourse and to look upon the dignified survivor of a past age.

He died at the Villa Castello, granted to him by Grand Duke Cosmo, having survived Elizabeth Southwell for eighteen years. The male line of his family became extinct with the death of his grandson, but the energy of the Dudleys did not leave itself without a witness in Italy. His granddaughter, Christina Marquesa Paleotti, was a lady of admired beauty and of many ups and downs in life. Her history has been written by Signor Corrado Ricci in 'Una illustre avventuriera.' She married one daughter among the proud Colonnas by a miracle of resolute diplomacy. Another daughter became the first Duchess of Shrewsbury. Her son Ferdinand also went to England, and in due course—that is to say, on the 28th March 1718—attained to the gallows at Tyburn for the murder of his servant Giovanni Niccoló. Family pride was strong in Ferdinand to the last. He insisted that he should be hanged well above the other criminals on whom justice took place on that day. His great-grandfather would probably have made the same demand in the same circumstances.

DAVID HANNAY.

A FORGOTTEN BATTLE: A STUDY IN OBSCURE NAVAL HISTORY.

I.

To the north of the Tropic of Capricorn, and lying about as far east of Madagascar as that immense island lies from the coast of Africa, are the two smaller islands of Mauritius and Réunion. In 1810 these were the only possessions left to the French in the East Indies, and were known respectively as the Isles of France and Bourbon. Both are small, but are not to be easily attacked: for while there are one or two good harbours, a tremendous surf beats eternally upon their coasts. The Isle of France was far the more important of the two. It was the seat of the Government; its harbour of Port Louis possessed a dockyard capable of fitting out and repairing large ships of war, and, sailing from this base, a number of heavy frigates had proved an endless annoyance to our East Indian trade. The two islands constituted the command of General Decaen, who, with a very inadequate garrison, contrived to delude the Indian Government into the belief that he had a powerful one.

Away to the north-east lies the little island of Rodriguez, then the British base in those waters. From here in 1809 was despatched a small expedition that captured Bourbon, did much damage, and then returned, the Government being unable to spare troops for a permanent occupation. The following year, however, it was determined that a serious effort should be made to take possession of both islands for good and all, and in July a powerful combined force put out from Rodriguez for this purpose.

Bourbon fell at once. The most serious obstacles were interposed by nature, and the only casualties sustained were caused by the surf, which stove in several boats. The expeditionary force now turned its eyes toward the more important Isle of France, and, pending the interruption which appears inevitable in such operations, it was determined to tighten the somewhat haphazard blockade of this island. Port Louis, on the west or leeward side, was already blockaded by Captain Lambert with several frigates; but on the east coast the important anchorage of Grand Port—or Port Imperial, as it was then called—lay open and unobserved. And early in August the 36-gun frigates *Sirius* and *Néréide*, with the *Staunch* (gun-brig), sailed, under Captain Pym of the *Sirius*, to remedy this omission.

They arrived off the harbour-mouth on the 10th of August. Their immediate objective was

a diminutive islet, the Isle de la Passe, which lies in the jaws of the intricate entrance like a cork in the neck of a bottle; and they found mounted upon this quite a formidable battery of four 24-pdrs., nine 18-pdrs., three 13-in. mortars, and two howitzers. It was determined, however, to attack without delay. The same evening Captain Nisbet Josiah Willoughby, of the *Néréide*, led in 400 men in boats; but the sea was heavy; the flotilla, overtaken by darkness, broke up and became disorganised, and the attack was relinquished. The following day the English vessels weighed and sailed, apparently discomfited.

Their departure, however, partook of the nature of a ruse. On the afternoon of the 13th Pym was back again off the islet and looking for the *Néréide*, which should have been there also; but the latter frigate, which had the *Staunch* in company, was foul-bottomed and sailing badly, and was not in sight. Night drew near and she had not come. By morning the garrison on the islet might be reinforced, and Pym determined not to wait. At eight o'clock 70 men in five boats pulled in towards the battery. Although 400 had been repulsed two days before, the garrison on this occasion do not seem to have offered a very strenuous resistance, and, at the cost of 18 killed and wounded, the Isle de la Passe was captured.

The belated *Néréide* and her consort arrived on the following morning. Willoughby had on board his ship 100 men of the 33rd and 69th Regiments and a dozen Madras artillerymen; and he was now left with his frigate and the brig to hold the islet and harass the enemy on the main island. On the 15th Pym sailed to rejoin Captain Lambert off Port Louis.

Willoughby was a man of a singularly active and daring temper, and filled with a most exalted public spirit. He was ingenious, capable, rash to excess; cast, in fact, in that heroic mould which is typified for all time in the person of Nelson. He was now in just such a situation as he might have prayed for. The day after the *Sirius* left him he took his frigate into the channel and anchored her behind the islet. On the latter he put Captain Todd of the 69th with 50 soldiers; and with the other half-hundred and his ship's company commenced a series of audacious descents upon the mainland.

For three days he was very busy disseminating anti-Napoleonic pamphlets with one hand and musket-bullets with the other about the Isle of France. On the 17th the capture of a fort, the rout of a detachment of troops, and the ignominious discomfiture of three boats fitted up as gun-vessels, which had the temerity to intercept his return, triumphantly inaugurated these excursions. On the 18th, the *Staunch*, for some reason, left him for Bourbon. By the 20th he had over-run a large tract of country: he had routed all the

enemy's detachments, and befriended and bepamphleted all the indigenous inhabitants; and he doubtless looked forward to continuing indefinitely this exhilarating pastime. But he was now to have a bigger matter on his hands.

The French squadron, during the capture of Bourbon and these subsequent operations, had effected little or nothing. The larger part of it was now shut up in the harbour of Port Louis, off which Captain Lambert with several frigates maintained a sedulous blockade; while at large, upon the Indian Ocean, Commodore Duperré, with two heavy frigates and a ship-corvette, was wasting his energies upon the side issue of our Indian trade. Early in August this officer, when off the north coast of Madagascar, fell in with three outward-bound East Indiamen, the *Ceylon*, *Windham*, and *Astell*. Captain Meriton of the *Ceylon*, the commodore of this little squadron, had some years before, while in command of another merchantman, assisted at the capture of a French frigate; and with this in his mind he seems now to have thought his three ships equal to the three of Duperré. He saw himself transcending the famous exploit of Sir Nathaniel Dance, and obtaining for himself and his fellow-captains knighthoods and jewelled swords from grateful corporations; and with much gallantry and lack of judgment, instead of bending all his energies to the saving of his valuable cargoes, he prepared for battle. But Duperré, at any rate, was not a Linois; and although the merchantmen fought with the greatest spirit, they were hopelessly overmatched. The *Ceylon* and *Windham* were captured, and the *Astell* only escaped through the coming of night. The prizes being valuable, Duperré determined to escort them to the Isle of France; and on the morning of the 20th he was sighted by the look-out on the *Néréide* approaching Grand Port.

The hour was only ten; but already the indefatigable Willoughby and his landing-party were ashore five miles up the harbour, when the *Néréide* was observed signalling the approach of five sail from the E.S.E. Willoughby at once jumped into his gig; and leaving the heavier boats to follow as fast as they were able, started on the long row back to his ship. It was noon before he got on board; the rest of his flotilla were a mile or more behind; and out at sea the five strangers were now drawing near.

When the Isle de la Passe had been taken, the French commandant, with criminal negligence, had allowed his signal-book to fall into the hands of the captors; and of this Willoughby proceeded to make use. The tricolour was already flying at the *Néréide's* gaff, and he now signalled a variety of mythical statements as to the whereabouts of the British squadron; the build of his ship, an ex-French frigate, assisting this deception materi-

ally. Duperré sailed placidly into the trap. The *Victor*, a ship-corvette recently captured from the British, led into the harbour; followed by the ex-Portuguese 50-gun frigate *Minerve*, the *Ceylon*, the *Bellone* 44, and finally the *Windham*.

The entrance to the harbour is exceedingly narrow. In the fairway was lying the *Néréide;* and the *Victor*, her topsails clewed up and her men aloft taking in sail, came drifting by within a few yards. She hailed the *Néréide;* and, at that instant, down came the latter's tricolour, and Willoughby, from the rail, ordered the corvette to anchor and strike. One can picture the consternation of the Frenchman; the sacres! the mon dieus; the helter-skelter scramble from the yards; one can well suppose there was pandemonium and delay. At any rate the *Néréide*, to expedite matters, fired a broadside into the corvette. This was sufficient: and she struck and anchored astern of the frigate.

The *Minerve* and *Ceylon*, following close upon the *Victor*, were already involved beyond repair in the intricate navigation of the channel. The *Néréide* had barely time to reload before the frigate was passing her; and immediately after, the *Ceylon*, in her turn, opened a vigorous cannonade. Both ships passed successfully into the anchorage. Meanwhile Duperré, in the *Bellone*, had signalled to his squadron to come about and close with him, but only the *Windham* was in a position to obey; whereupon the Commodore put his ship also at the harbour mouth, and followed the others. He, too, exchanged broadsides with the *Néréide*, and while in the act the surrendered *Victor*, which had not yet been boarded from the British frigate, cut her cable, rehoisted her colours, and drifted down after the *Ceylon*—a proceeding in flagrant defiance of the accepted rules of capture. The *Bellone*, having safely passed the *Néréide*, brought up the rear. The *Windham*, still out at sea, determined to remain there, made sail, and fled.

And then followed an almost incredible incident. It will be remembered that Willoughby had returned to his frigate well ahead of the rest of his landing-party. These heavy boats, crowded with more than 100 men, were now toiling painfully down the harbour; and sailing to meet them, almost filling the fairway, came the four French ships. They were caught in the narrows: mud and marsh lay upon either hand, and there seemed to be no question of escape. They could only wait gloomily for the inevitable hail and surrender. On board the *Néréide* they were given up as lost. The four big ships and the tiny flotilla drew together: they met: and past the four broadsides, without a shot, without a hail, the *Néréide's* boats rowed desperately into safety. They were so close that their oars scraped the ship's sides, and the Frenchmen, leaning over the bulwarks,

looked down into them; but the squadron passed on in stately and incomprehensible silence. The agonised and amazed spectators on the *Néréide* broke into loud cheering as their comrades rejoined the ship.

The day's adventures were now over, and Willoughby could repair his damages, which were not inconsiderable, and lay his plans for the future. His trap had worked to a miracle: such a prize as he could hardly have dreamed of had tumbled ignominiously into it, and the last French squadron in those waters lay securely cooped up in his species of bottle, of which his frigate and islet were the stopper. They now lay anchored at the head of the harbour, under the protection of some guns on shore, and manifested no inclination to attack Willoughby. Such an attack would indeed have been a matter of enormous difficulty, since they would have to struggle one by one up the narrow and tortuous channel under the guns of the frigate and the battery; but it would become virtually hopeless when the *Néréide* was reinforced, as they must have known she was likely to be. In fact, on the afternoon of the action, Willoughby sent off a boat to Captain Pym, who was somewhere on the other side of the Isle of France, informing him of his success. In the meantime he employed himself by dropping bombs from the captured mortars among the French squadron, which was eventually obliged to weigh and move closer inshore. He also despatched a boat under a flag of truce to demand from Commodore Duperré the surrender of the *Victor*, which had struck to him; but the Commodore, who had no intention of giving up the corvette, indulged in a variety of quibbles as foolish as they were dishonourable. So passed the remainder of the 20th and the 21st of August.

The *Néréide's* boat, after a long and adventurous voyage round the island, was picked up by Captain Pym. That officer, having sent to inform Captain Lambert—off Port Louis—of his intentions, immediately sailed for Grand Port. He had already some knowledge of the events at the latter place, for he had just previously recaptured the East Indiaman *Windham* under rather remarkable circumstances. This ship had only escaped from Willoughby's trap to fall in with the *Sirius;* but the land being then close at hand, she seemed likely to escape up a creek defended by batteries before the frigate could overhaul her. The wind was light and the weather foggy, and from the *Sirius* it was impossible to make out the size of the chase. Conceiving her to be a small coasting vessel, an officer volunteered to take a boat's crew and board her; and having set off with but five men, he was shortly followed by a second boat with five more. The two little craft rapidly overtook the *Windham*, when, not only was

she seen to be a big Indiaman mounting 36 heavy guns, but it was also discovered that, by some incredible blunder, both boats had put off without weapons of any description. Such obstacles, however, were not permitted to interfere for a moment with their designs, and, armed solely with boat-stretchers, these eleven men boarded and carried with the greatest ease a merchantman as big as a frigate, armed with 36 18-pdrs. and manned by a prize-crew of between 30 and 40 men.

On the morning of the 22nd the *Sirius* arrived off Grand Port. Willoughby, from within the harbour, immediately signalled that the enemy was of inferior force, a characteristic statement altogether opposed to the facts. Pym, at any rate, whether misled or not, determined to run in at once and attack, but while negotiating the difficult entrance he ran his frigate on the ground. Everything possible was done to lighten her; but the tide was falling, night was coming on, and it was soon apparent that she must wait for the flood in the morning.

She floated again at 8 A.M. next day, the 23rd. Shortly after two sail were sighted approaching the harbour. These proved to be the British 36-gun frigates *Iphigenia* (Captain Lambert) and *Magicienne* (Captain Curtis), both come from the blockade of Port Louis to assist Captain Pym. A little after two o'clock they were safely inside and anchored with their consorts, and although so much of the day was gone, it was determined at a council of war to attack the same evening. At a quarter to five the four frigates weighed and sailed up the harbour towards the enemy.

II.

The English frigates were all nominally 36-gun ships. The guns of the *Sirius* and *Iphigenia* were 18-pdrs.; those of the *Magicienne* and *Néréide*, 12-pdrs.; and the latter two were consequently smaller and weaker ships. The combined crews of the squadron amounted to little more than 1000 men.

Of the enemy, the *Minerve* was a fine 52-gun frigate, carrying 18-pdrs. She had been captured the previous year from the Portuguese. The *Bellone*, flying the Commodore's pennant, was an 18-pdr. 44. The ex-British *Victor* carried 22 guns; the *Windham*, 26,—in both cases probably 18's. Remembering, therefore, that frigates invariably carried several guns above their tabulated establishment, it will appear that these ships mounted about 150 guns, against a possible 160 on the four British; half of the latter, however, being of a light calibre. Moreover, the French lay under some batteries of uncertain strength; and having learnt from General Decaen

at Port Louis that Lambert had sailed to reinforce Pym, they had once more shifted their position, and now lay close inshore in a crescent formation, with springs upon their cables, and either extremity of their line protected by shoals. Weighing one thing with another, we may consider the opposing forces almost equal, for the French shore batteries do not seem to have played a very important part in the engagement; but the puzzling currents and numerous shoals in the harbour presented obstacles to the assailants which only a combination of the highest judgment and good fortune could have surmounted. These obstacles were certainly underrated; and good fortune, throughout that fatal evening, never came our way.

We left the British squadron under way and proceeding up the harbour; the *Néréide* leading, followed by the *Magicienne*, *Iphigenia*, and *Sirius*. Willoughby alone of the four captains had any acquaintance with the intricacies of the channel, and had on board a black pilot. The enemy seem to have reserved their fire until the *Néréide* was quite near to them, when, at ten minutes past five, the explosion of 70 guns split the silence of the harbour as ships and batteries opened simultaneously upon the little frigate. Under this concentrated fire she must have suffered severely. Like the *Victory* at Trafalgar, she bore it for some time unsupported; but she ran in still closer before she returned it. She was intended to anchor opposite the gap between the *Victor*, the last ship in the French line, and the latter's next ahead, the *Bellone;* and in such a position as to keep her guns bearing upon the bow of the one and the stern of the other.

The *Magicienne* was to have anchored immediately astern of the *Néréide*. It was her duty to divide with the latter the French Commodore's heavy broadside; and probably these two light frigates would have had their work cut out to silence the *Bellone* and the corvette. But in the event the *Magicienne* never got to her station at all. She ran hard aground: and Willoughby, having picked his way with much dexterity among the pitfalls of the anchorage, and arrived almost at his allotted station, found himself alone. The *Magicienne* was piled immovably upon a sandbank within musket-shot of the *Minerve* in such a fashion that only three forecastle guns could be trained upon the enemy. With the opposing forces so evenly balanced this disaster alone might have decided the event of the battle, and at the moment it seriously disorganised the British plan of attack. Willoughby, therefore, with great gallantry, determined to take upon himself the whole weight of the French rear. Being then almost in the position the *Magicienne* should have taken, within pistol-shot of the *Bellone*, barely a quarter

of a mile from the shore, and surrounded by shoal-water, he let out his small bower with a spring upon it, swung round, and commenced a most rapid and damaging fire. It was then just half-past five.

But already the whole scheme of attack was crumbling away. The *Iphigenia* had come into action at 5.30, on the larboard quarter of the luckless *Magicienne;* but, by reason, apparently, of shoal water, was nowhere near where she should have been. One account puts her position at nearly a mile from the enemy's line; and, although this seems to be an exaggeration, there can be no doubt that the fire she opened upon the *Minerve* and *Bellone* was comparatively ineffective. Upon the *Ceylon* and the batteries her guns played with better result. There still remained the *Sirius* to redress the balance; and it must have been obvious to Pym that success depended now upon how near the enemy he could bring his ship. It may have been careful sounding that retarded her progress, for there appears to have been a wide interval between her and the *Iphigenia;* but without a pilot careful sounding was to avail her nothing. She was virtually still out of gun-shot when, at twenty minutes to six, she too ran herself ashore.

Towards six o'clock, then, when the British squadron should have been anchored together in line hammering at the enemy, the actual situation was vastly different. We were already within measurable distance of a humiliating disaster. The *Néréide*, a weak 12-pdr. frigate, was involved in a most unequal conflict with a frigate of twice her power on her beam, a corvette across her bows, a second frigate astern firing into her with every gun that would bear, and shore batteries presumably taking their hand in the game. Already, after half an hour's action, her rigging was shot to pieces, several guns had been dismounted, and her loss in men was becoming serious. The *Iphigenia*, for one reason or another, was effecting little and suffering less. The *Magicienne* was engaged in a long-range musketry combat with the *Minerve*, and in frenzied endeavours to get herself off the mud. Away up in the narrows the maddened crew of the *Sirius* laboured at the same heartbreaking business, ever looking over their shoulders to watch with painful anxiety the battle that was developing in flame and sound down the bay.

This must have been a bad hour for Captain Pym, though far worse hours were to follow. The unfortunate Commodore saw his whole enterprise, within the period of a few minutes, dissolved in calamity; and it must already have seemed manifest that unless he speedily got his frigate off the ground, it would be beyond his power to avert, or even mitigate, an appalling disaster. Seconds had acquired the importance of hours. The crew of the *Sirius* performed herculean feats under the influence of rage and despair. Guns were run aft, cables

got out, boats and anchors carried astern; and less than thirty minutes after the ship had grounded she moved again. She floated: and while warps were brought in-board and the decks cleared for action, the boats took towing-lines ahead to get her under way. But the fighting days of the *Sirius* were over. Almost at once, amid the curses of her people, she took the ground again and remained immovable.

The sufferings of Tantalus were as nothing compared with those of Captain Pym; for this happened at a moment when the presence of his ship in the battle would, in all probability, have decided its issue. A capricious fortune offered us one helping hand and immediately repelled us with the other. The second grounding of the *Sirius* synchronised with a series of startling mishaps that suddenly and completely shattered the French line, and flung their whole squadron, for the moment, into utter confusion.

Accounts of this incident are conflicting and meagre, but it appears to have commenced by the *Ceylon*, at the head of their line, striking her flag. The *Iphigenia* thereupon hailed the *Magicienne*, as being nearer the Indiaman, to send a boat on board of her; but before anything could be done the *Ceylon* let out her topsails, cut her cable, and ran for the shore. Simultaneously the cable of her next astern, the *Minerve*, was shot in two; and that ship drifted after the *Ceylon*. One or both of these ships then fouled the *Bellone*, who, in her turn, was forced to cut or slip. To complete this all but incredible catalogue of disaster, the *Victor* also had her cable shot away, failed to run out another one in time, and went drifting down with the tide to join her consorts, all of whom were now aground. To Captain Pym, watching with amazement from the distant *Sirius* this sudden collapse of the French line, it seemed that "the whole of the enemy was on shore in a heap"; and, indeed, there was now presented the remarkable spectacle of a naval battle in which the half of one squadron and the whole of the other were reclining ingloriously upon the mud.

It is impossible to repress the conviction that, notwithstanding the absence of the *Sirius*, this was a case of that tide which, "taken at the flood, leads on to fortune"; that this complete, if temporary, paralysis of the French squadron as a fighting unit was not turned to our advantage as it might have been. The whole of the enemy's squadron was either ashore or drifting there; and it requires no profound insight into the Gallic temperament to divine that there must have been considerable confusion, if not actual pandemonium, on board those four ships. It will be equally obvious to any one possessing an elementary knowledge of sailing-vessels of that size that these events would occupy more than a few minutes, and they must have entailed a virtual cessation of the French fire. The boats and crews of

the *Magicienne* and *Iphigenia* were practically intact; and granting that an attack in them seemed impossible or injudicious, it is not easy to understand why they were not employed to support or succour the exposed *Néréide*. Captain Lambert wished to run down with the *Iphigenia* and board the *Minerve*, but was prevented by an intervening shoal; but his boats might have towed him down nearer to the *Néréide*, or in default of that, might have towed Willoughby, whose own boats were now mostly in splinters, out into a safer berth. But the critical situation of the *Néréide* does not seem to have been recognised by the other captains. The golden moment, if such it was, passed, never to return; the French recovered from their confusion with praiseworthy celerity; and the noise of battle swelled again into its former tumult.

Whether apathy or inability were responsible for this failure to seize the psychological moment, the fruits of the omission were instant and disastrous. In the new and involuntary disposition of the French ships, the *Minerve*, lying on the mud immediately behind the *Bellone*, was practically out of action, since her broadside was masked; but the flagship, also aground, still lay broadside on to the beam of the *Néréide*, though at a rather greater distance; and the *Ceylon* and *Victor*, ashore on either hand of the *Minerve*, remained on even keels notwithstanding a falling tide, and could train most of their guns on Willoughby's ship. All could afford to ignore, and did ignore, the *Iphigenia*, now at a considerable distance from them. On our side, from now until the inevitable end, interest centres about the *Néréide*. The *Iphigenia* continued to engage the shore batteries, but although she seems to have done them much harm at small loss to herself, her efforts bore no relevance to the main issue. As for the *Magicienne* and *Sirius*, they were as completely fixtures in the harbour as the banks on which they lay. The whole weight of the battle had now devolved upon Willoughby, and upon Willoughby alone; and he maintained it, hour after hour, at the cost of a dreadful slaughter of his people, with unflagging constancy and spirit.

It was now nearing sunset. The tide was running rapidly out; the wind had dropped; and the smoke-clouds settled heavily down upon the water. The ebb threatened to leave the *Magicienne* high and dry, and she was hulled several times below the water-line by shot from the batteries. She had also sprung a leak when she grounded; and now all efforts to get her off were perforce abandoned. On the *Sirius* relays of desperate men were straining and sweating at the windlass, dragging kedge-anchors bodily through the mud without moving the ship an inch. Pym, a helpless spectator of the ruin of his squadron, saw from his quarter-deck the dark hills behind the harbour dissolve into the

gathering night; and with the falling of the wind there set in a thin drizzle of rain that lasted on into the morning. But still the gun-flashes flickered up and down the harbour, and the rattle of the firing rose and fell unceasingly; and always flame and sound were fiercest about the spot where the *Néréide* maintained her astonishing resistance.

But on board that ship matters were rapidly becoming desperate. About seven o'clock the spring on her cable was shot away; whereupon she swung round stern on to the *Bellone*, and in this position endured helplessly for some time a dreadful raking fire, without being able to train a gun in reply. At length her best bower anchor was got out, her small one cut away, and she came round again so as to bring her starboard broadside to bear. She was by this time a mere wreck. Her rigging was reduced to festoons of tangled and useless cordage; half her men were down, and Willoughby had been struck by a splinter that tore an eye out. He refused to go below, but continued from his quarterdeck to animate the heroic resistance of his people. His fire never slackened; and the *Bellone*, too, was suffering severely. But the latter's casualties were replaced by draughts of the useless crew of the *Minerve;* and a number of soldiers, recently arrived overland from Port Louis, were also brought on board of her. Her reinforcements, from first to last, are estimated at more than 400 men. Duperré was presently wounded in the head, and Captain Bouvet of the *Minerve* came on board and took over the command.

The musketry fire of the soldiers in her tops and gangways eventually cleared the upper decks of the *Néréide* of all but the dead. The forecastle and quarterdeck guns were abandoned; but below, in the inferno of the gun-deck, beneath battle-lanterns hardly showing in the thick and poisonous smoke, the blackened and scarred remnant of the crew still toiled half-naked at their pieces. By eight o'clock their fire, although still rapid and accurate, was weakening; for several guns had been dismounted. Willoughby had been struck again by a langridge shot, and cast senseless on the deck, and, having recovered, was immediately wounded a third time. His first lieutenant was dead; his second had been carried, covered with wounds, to the cockpit. As some evidence of the ordeal the *Néréide* underwent, it may be mentioned that this officer received twenty-two wounds! Still the fight continued, and yet another hour passed. By this time all her officers and two-thirds of her crew were dead or wounded — the proportion of dead being exceptionally high, as most of the injured were hit again and again as they lay about the decks. More guns had been dismounted; her masts, wound-

ed and with standing and running rigging completely shot away, threatened every minute to go over the side; and the *Bellone's* heavy metal had so shattered her that no part of her was safe. But "Fighting Willoughby," as that officer was named in the service, had indeed a crew after his own heart, and a superhuman spirit seems to have animated every one on board.

At length, however, Willoughby decided that he had asked enough of his men. It was ten o'clock, and for five hours the *Néréide* had practically fought the battle single-handed. She was now not merely a wreck, but a shambles. The hold was full to overflowing with wounded, many dead had been cast overboard, and yet bodies lay in heaps about the gun-deck. The dropping tide had left her aground astern; her broken sides let in round-shot and bullets from end to end; and from shot-holes and scuppers blood trickled down them into the water. The French fire had never slackened, for fresh men poured continually into their ships; and one can say of the *Néréide* — a small, weak, 12-pdr. frigate — that no vessel, before or since, has endured for so long so terrible a punishment. Willoughby now determined to save the pitiful remnant of his crew while there was yet that remnant left to be saved, and he ordered them below.

The *Néréide* at last fell silent. But even in this extremity Willoughby was not thinking of striking his flag. Half blinded and in agony, down with his dead and dying beneath the battle-lanterns in the hold, with his ship shaking and splintering above him under the enemy's fire, this indomitable man was actually revolving in his mind fresh projects for that enemy's destruction. He had still two boats, which with assiduous bailing might be kept afloat; and the least leaky of these was now despatched under an acting lieutenant (there not being an officer left on his feet) with a message to Captain Pym. Willoughby desired to know whether the Commodore could tow the *Néréide* out; or whether, in default of that, she should be set on fire. In the latter eventuality she would drift down on to the *Bellone*—and, destroying not only that ship, but probably the whole French squadron which lay bunched together, would, on that unexampled pyre, sacrifice herself for victory.

For nearly another hour after the boat had been sent off, Willoughby and his men held out in the shattered and silent hulk. The French, observing that although the *Néréide's* fire had ceased, she yet made no signal of surrender, continued their cannonade, though with less vigour. At about a quarter to eleven a boat from the *Sirius* arrived in charge of a lieutenant of that ship. Pym considered both of Willoughby's plans unworkable — one may presume for the following reasons: the first, because he hoped to

get the *Sirius* afloat with the morning tide, and would require all his boats; the second, on account of the difficulty of removing in the darkness the *Néréide's* multitude of wounded. Whether the boats of the *Magicienne* and *Iphigenia* might not have been employed to tow out Willoughby is another matter, the disregard of which it is not easy to understand. In conclusion, Pym asked Willoughby to come on board the *Sirius*.

It is not unlikely that the latter, defeated, wounded, suffering both in mind and body, felt, as he looked upon his shattered frigate and decimated crew, some resentment towards those who had left him for so long overmatched and unsupported. If indeed he thought this, his cup of bitterness was now to be overcharged; for, as a last mortification to a truly heroic spirit, there rowed up a boat from the *Iphigenia* with an inquiry as to why the *Néréide* had ceased firing. The reasons were sufficiently obvious; and Willoughby now sent back word to the Commodore that he would not leave his crew, and that he had struck. Some twenty of his unwounded men, their constancy at length failing before the prospect of a French prison, contrived to get away in this boat and in the one previously sent from the *Néréide*.

It was now necessary to convey the news of the latter's surrender to the *Bellone*. Although the two ships were within hail, it was impossible to make those on the Frenchman realise the state of affairs; and accordingly Willoughby's last remaining boat put off for that purpose. She took in water so fast, however, that she was forced to return hurriedly; and so, for nearly three hours longer, the French frigate continued to fire into the conquered and unresponsive *Néréide*. At 12.30 the latter's mainmast went over the side. At 1.30 some of her sails and rigging took fire, but the blaze was fortunately mastered. At length, shortly before two o'clock, some French prisoners, of whom there were twenty on board, contrived to make their countrymen understand that during all this time they had been firing into a surrendered hulk filled almost solely with dead and wounded. The *Bellone* ceased firing; the *Iphigenia* and *Magicienne*, who had been still desultorily engaging the batteries, which they had now silenced, ceased also; the smoke melted away; and a strange and dreadful silence fell upon the harbour.

But during the few remaining hours of darkness both sides were feverishly active. The French were endeavouring to lighten their ships so that they would float in the morning, when they could triumphantly gather in the fruits of victory. The British were gloomily working to save what could be saved from the wreck of their hopes. At 4 A.M. Pym ordered the *Iphigenia* to warp out of gunshot. At daybreak the *Bellone* suddenly recommenced her fire into the hapless *Néréide*. The latter

hailed that she had struck; and, on the fire continuing, hoisted French colours. Even that failed to stop this disgraceful and unprovoked attack. It was then discovered that the Jack on the *Néréide's* mizzen top-gallant mast was still flying, and there being not a shred of standing or running rigging left attached to the mast, it was impossible either to lower it or to go aloft and fetch it down. The mizzen was therefore cut away bodily, whereupon the *Bellone* ceased her fire. If this pathetic and innocent piece of bunting had indeed deluded the French into thinking the *Néréide* still an active and dangerous opponent, their nerves must have been greatly shattered; and any other supposition accuses them of a wanton piece of cruelty. That they were still in much uncertainty and confusion may be guessed from the fact that they could spare no time to send on board their prize until three o'clock in the afternoon.

In the meanwhile the *Magicienne* had again begun to cannonade the works on shore, at the repair of which parties of soldiers were labouring. The *Iphigenia*, fully employed in warping out, took no part in this brief recrudescence of the battle, which soon died out again. But by seven o'clock Lambert had at last got his ship well clear of the shoal that had baffled him all the previous evening. He now sent to Captain Pym to request the loan of part of the crews of the *Sirius* and *Magicienne*, and permission to run down with this reinforcement and board the French ships. Had this request been granted, it is possible that even at this hour the battle might have been retrieved; the French, at any rate, on seeing the *Iphigenia* arrived in a position from which she could come down to close quarters, manifested much confusion and alarm. So completely were they obsessed with the fear of this possible attack, that when, just before three o'clock, a lieutenant from the *Bellone* came on board the *Néréide*, it was only that he might spike her guns, take the keys of the magazine, and remove the French prisoners; the frigate being then left for another ten hours with her load of dead and dying. This extraordinary neglect savours of panic, and goes far to confirm Lambert's belief that the time was ripe for a determined counter-stroke. But Pym was of another opinion. He still laboured under the delusion that his ship could be refloated, and consequently considered that any premature action would be unnecessarily rash. As the *Iphigenia* might assist him off the mud, she was ordered to resume warping. The French, however, now reopened their fire upon her; and after she had been hulled several times, Lambert sent once more to the Commodore to say that he would be forced to recommence the action in his own defence. But even this failed to move Pym. An imperative command to continue warping was returned. Before noon, therefore, the

Iphigenia had got herself close up to the *Sirius;* and the French confined their attentions to the *Magicienne.*

But by this time the flood-tide, while it had failed to move the *Sirius,* had shown conclusively that the *Magicienne* was beyond removal or repair. She had 9 feet of water in her hold; she was continually being pierced in fresh places below the water-line; and soon after five it was decided that she must be abandoned and destroyed. Her crew were taken on board the *Iphigenia;* and at 7.30 she was fired in several places.

Another night was now approaching, and none of the grounded ships were yet afloat. During the earlier hours of darkness the whole harbour was illuminated by the vast pillar of fire that rose from the *Magicienne.* By the aid of this tremendous lamp both combatants continued their labours—the *Sirius* in vain borrowing cables and anchors from the *Iphigenia;* the French as fruitlessly jettisoning guns and stores. At 11 o'clock the *Magicienne,* her colours still flying, blew up with a shocking detonation. A great gush of flame leapt skyward and vanished; an intense silence and gloom shut down upon the harbour; and presently, from all quarters of the night, there rained down multitudes of glowing and cindered fragments.

With the destruction of this ship active hostilities had come to an end; and although it will be necessary to detail briefly to their disastrous conclusion the further fortunes of the two remaining British frigates, it will be convenient to deal here with the losses in men sustained during the action. The French total was officially put at 37 killed and 112 wounded, nearly all being debited to the *Bellone;* but although these figures in themselves are highly creditable to the *Néréide,* there is good reason to believe them a gross underestimate. The total should be nearer 300 than 150. Upon the British side, the *Sirius* with a complement of about 250 did not have a man touched, nor, apparently, so much as a rope injured. The *Magicienne,* after being helplessly aground under the enemy's guns for twenty-four hours, had 8 men killed and 20 wounded out of a crew of 251. On board the *Iphigenia,* which went into action with 255 men, and which was anxious to know why the *Néréide* had ceased firing, 5 men were killed and 13 wounded. The *Néréide's* crew of 250 was reduced by about 20 men absent in prizes; but she had on board 60 soldiers, and so mustered a total of 281 souls. Of these she lost 4 officers and 88 men killed, and 5 officers and more than 130 men badly wounded or incapacitated; leaving her at the close with some 50 men to work and fight the ship. Comment upon these figures is superfluous. It will be sufficient to remark that such a proportion of loss is almost certainly unparalleled.

The dawn of the 25th found the situation unchanged. But when the morning flood once more failed to move the *Sirius*, Pym at length realised that his ship was irretrievably lost. It only remained to destroy her, as the *Magicienne* had been destroyed; and her crew would have to be taken on board the already overcrowded *Iphigenia*. The day was consumed in preparations for this unpleasant business, while Lambert continued to warp his frigate up the channel towards the Isle de la Passe.

In the afternoon the garrison on that islet saw a ship in the offing. This vessel, which was the French brig of war *Entreprenante*, ran up close to the harbour mouth, and lying to, observed the operations on board the *Sirius* and *Iphigenia*. Towards dusk, Lieutenant Watling, in the former's pinnace, was sent off with despatches to the Commodore at Bourbon; and on getting outside the harbour was immediately chased by the *Entreprenante*. By pulling among the breakers, however, at the risk of their necks, the boat's crew contrived to get away into the darkness; and the brig resumed her station off the harbour. All was now ready for the destruction of the *Sirius*. As night fell her crew left her and she was set on fire. Up to this time, none of the French ships in the anchorage had got afloat.

Pym, on going on board the *Iphigenia*, gave up the command to Captain Lambert. All night the maddening process of warping against a stiff breeze was continued. At 11 o'clock, with another terrific explosion, the *Sirius* went up into the air, to the great alarm of the French, who were afraid of the wind blowing burning fragments down on to them. The morning of the 26th found the *Iphigenia* still some way from the Isle de la Passe: the *Entreprenante* still keeping watch outside; and the *Bellone* at length actually afloat.

Captain Lambert's situation was most unenviable. After a day of battle which ended in disaster, and in which, for various reasons, he was unable to take a prominent part, followed by a second day of vain endeavour and increasing depression, he now found himself in command of the discouraged remains of the expedition. More than 800 officers and men were crowded into his frigate: he was short of water, food, and ammunition; and with the wind in his teeth he was forced to submit with what patience he might to the snail-like process of warping up the channel. Meanwhile, behind him, ship after ship of the French squadron was getting afloat, refitting, and taking in guns and stores; and out at sea, a harbinger of worse to follow, the *Entreprenante* lay silently at anchor and watched events.

Lambert must have suspected that the brig was but the advance-guard of a second French squadron. In fact, only adverse winds had prevented the latter arriving off Grand Port several days

earlier. When the *Iphigenia* and *Magicienne* forsook the blockade of Port Louis to reinforce Captain Pym, they seem to have been the only ships employed on that service; and their departure set free the French vessels hitherto locked up in the harbour. At midnight of the same day, the 21st, Commodore Hameln led out the 40-gun frigates *Vénus*, *Astrée*, and *Manche* in hot pursuit. Being only a few hours behind Lambert, he should have arrived at Grand Port in the middle of the battle of the 23rd, in which event the British squadron would have been caught between two fires. But the wind which blew Lambert rapidly round the southern point of the Isle of France, suddenly veered after dark, and came in strong gusts from the opposite quarter; and the French, after vainly endeavouring to make head against it, were forced to put about and take the longer northern passage. Further variations of wind continued to retard their progress; and they actually took five days to circumnavigate the island.

Yet towards the unfortunate *Iphigenia* the elements had proved even more unkind. She had taken no less than three days to warp herself up the five or six miles of harbour at Grand Port; and the morning of the 27th found her still at work against a stiff tide and breeze, near Willoughby's original position behind the Isle de la Passe. Down in the harbour all the French had left the ground and were nearly ready for action. At eight o'clock the *Entreprenante* in the offing was seen to be signalling; and shortly after three sail were sighted coming up rapidly from the N.E. These were the long-delayed *Vénus*, *Astrée*, and *Manche*.

Nothing could now have saved Lambert, but he made such dispositions as he could with a view to possible fighting. About 500 men were sent on to the Isle de la Passe; and with nearly 400 left on board, the *Iphigenia* cleared for action. But half an hour's fighting would have exhausted her supply of round-shot for the main battery; she had scarcely any provisions left, and she had no water at all. Under these circumstances, upon the French frigates arriving outside and anchoring with the *Entreprenante*, Lambert opened negotiations with Commodore Hameln. These could only have one end: and from stipulations that he and his frigate should be allowed to sail away in exchange for the surrender of the Isle de la Passe, the former was beaten down to a complete capitulation conditional on the release of his men within a month. It may be added that this condition was not complied with.

And so the prolonged agony had come to an end. All was over: and three more British captains and more than 800 seamen and soldiers went to join Willoughby and his remnant in the prisons of Port Louis. Two British frigates had been destroyed by their own crews; two others had been captured by the enemy. In the *Iphigenia* the French

secured an excellent new ship, as sound and ready for immediate employment as when she had sailed into the harbour; and within a month, under her new flag, she assisted the *Astrée* to capture the British frigate *Africaine* in sad and disgraceful circumstances. But the *Néréide*, although she once more hoisted for a few weeks the colours under which she had been launched, had been shattered beyond repair; and upon the occupation of the Isle of France by the British it was decided that she was not fit to endure the voyage home. She was accordingly broken up and sold on the spot; but her imperishable name was transferred to the captured French frigate *Vénus*.

A few remarks may wind up this little detail of noteworthy but forgotten events. The rock upon which the British split from first to last was undoubtedly precipitation. There was, in the first place, no reason whatsoever why the ships in Grand Port should have been attacked. The *Néréide* and *Sirius*, in conjunction with the battery on the islet, could easily have held them in the harbour for an indefinite time, provided a similarly stringent blockade was maintained off Port Louis; and Captain Pym must have known that within a few months at the longest the preparations for the invasion of the Isle of France would be completed, when the whole French squadron must of necessity fall into our hands. However, he would not wait; and not only was an unnecessary and dangerous enterprise embarked upon, but further reckless precipitation was displayed in the method of attack. Whoever was responsible for the withdrawal of Lambert's two ships from the blockade of Port Louis was guilty of a grave error: for he simply provided an opportunity for Commodore Hameln to escape and pursue him; when, by the delay of a day or two, other ships to take over the blockade could have been obtained from Commodore Rowley at Bourbon. The fact that Pym intended to attack without him, and was only prevented by the first grounding of his ship, in no way affects the argument. Once, however, the four frigates were together at Grand Port, a prompt onslaught was forced upon them: because they knew that Hameln must by that time be after them, and they could not expect him to take five days to sail round a small island. Of the operations within the harbour nothing remains to be said. The precipitate attack down an unknown and peculiarly difficult entrance resulted, as might have been expected, in disaster; but one is inclined, reluctantly, to think that this disaster might have been mitigated, or even retrieved, had all the opportunities offered been promptly accepted. But while there is much to deplore, one feature raises this defeat above a hundred victories: and the last fight of the *Néréide*, although utterly neglected and cast away upon the scrap-heap of history, is worthy of a place beside that of Grenville's *Revenge*.

DOUGLAS G. BROWNE.

HOCKEN AND HUNKEN.

A TALE OF TROY.

BY "Q."

CHAPTER VIII.—'BIAS APPROVES.

As they departed and went their way down the coombe, a constrained silence fell between the two friends. Nor did either break it until they came again in sight of the railway station.

"I don't altogether like the air in this valley," announced 'Bias.

"It *is* a trifle close, now you mention it," Cai agreed.

"Nor I don't altogether cotton to the valley, neither. Pretty enough, you may say; but it gives you a *feelin'*—like as if you didn't know what was goin' to happen next."

"Places do have that effect with some," Cai assented again, but more dejectedly. Horrid apprehension—if 'Bias should extend his dislike to Troy itself!

"I'm feeling better already," 'Bias continued, answering and allaying this unspoken fear. "Is that the gasworks yonder?"

"Yes. The *real* scenery's at the other end o' the town."

"The smell's healthy, they tell me." 'Bias halted in the roadway, and casting back his head took a long stare up at the gasometer. "You mustn' hurry me," he said, "I've got to enjoy *everything*."

"No hurry at all," said Cai, from whose heart the words lifted a burden at least as heavy as the musical-box under his arm. "Hullo! here's Bill Tregaskis with his missus! . . . Evenin', William—good evenin', ma'am!" Captain Cai pulled off his hat. "I hope you find your husband none the worse for the voyage?—though, to be sure, 'tisn' fair on him nor on any seamen, the way some folks reproaches us when we get back home."

Mrs Tregaskis dropped a curtsey. "But be sure, sir—what reproaches?"

"Your looks, ma'am—your looks, if I may say so! . . . William married you soon as he could, I'll wager; but, to be fair, that should ha' been ten years afore *you* married *him*."

"La, sir!" answered Mrs Tregaskis blushing. "I wonder you never married, yourself—you talk such nonsense! But you're in spirits to-day, as any one can see." She glanced at the broad back of Captain Tobias, who stood a few paces away, with legs planted wide and gaze still wrapped in contemplation of the gasometer. "Makin' so bold, sir, is that your friend we've heard tell so much about?"

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"It is, ma'am," Captain Cai turned about to call up 'Bias to be introduced, when Mr Tregaskis gently checked him, laying a hand on the musical-box.

"I didn' think it worth mentionin' at the time, sir; but these instruments aren't intended for carryin' about."

"No, no," Captain Cai agreed hastily. "Here, 'Bias! Look around an' see who's the first to welcome ye! Tregaskis, of all men! And this here's his missus."

"How d'e do, Mr Tregaskis," said Captain Tobias, shaking hands. He knew the mate of the *Hannah Hoo*, and respected him for a capable seaman. "I hope I see you well, ma'am?"

"Nicely, sir, thank you!" Mrs Tregaskis curtseyed and beamed.

But Captain Tobias, though with her, too, he shook hands politely enough, was plainly preoccupied. "'Tis a wonderful invention," said he. "You just let the gas run in, an' then it is ready for use at any time. I hadn't a notion you was so up-to-date here."

Mr Tregaskis looked puzzled. "It don't work by *gas*. You wind it up with a cog arrangement, which acts on a spring coil, I'm told—just like the inside of a watch. But we can see by liftin' up the lid."

"Eh?" Captain Tobias glanced back over his shoulder.

"But as I was tellin' the boss, 'twas never *intended* for a country walk. You sets it down at home and calls for a tune—as it might be drinks," continued Mr Tregaskis lucidly.

Captain Cai touched his friend's elbow. "You're talkin' o' different things, you two," he explained in a nervous haste, anxious to get off delicate ground. "Tregaskis was aludin' to — er — this here; which" he concluded, "nobody could have been more taken aback than I was this mornin' . . . when it happened."

"You don't say that's the musical-box!" cried Mrs Tregaskis. "Now, don't you agree, sir"—she appealed to Captain Tobias—"with what I said to William at dinner-time, when he told me about the presentation, and the speeches? [Here Captain Cai shot a look at his mate, who flushed but kept his eyes averted, pretending carelessness.] I said that for a lot of ignorant seamen 'twas quite a happy thought, an' nobody could say as Captain Hocken didn' deserve it; but, the thing bein' bought in such a hurry—an' knowin' William as I do—ten to one he'd been taken in an' the thing wouldn't work when it came to be tried."

"I told you," put in her spouse, "as the salesman had shown us how to work it, an' it played the most life-like tunes, 'Home Sweet Home' inclooded."

"The salesman!" said Mrs Tregaskis scornfully. "A long way you'll go in the world if you trust a salesman! Why, there was a young man once in Harris's Drapery showed me a bonnet—with hummingbirds—perfectly outrageous; I wouldn' ha' been seen in it;

and inside o' five minutes he had me there with the tears in my eyes to think I couldn' afford it."

"It works all right indeed, ma'am," Captain Cai assured her.

"Ah, maybe you're cleverer with machinery than William? I don't know how you find him at sea, but *I* can't trust him to wind the clock."

"I didn' set it goin' myself, ma'am; not personally."

"Well," sighed Mrs Tregaskis, "I wish William had consulted me, anyway, before buying the thing in such a hurry. It's shop-soiled, he has to admit; which I only hope you'll overlook."

"I've told you, my dear," put in Mr Tregaskis patiently, "that the mark was done by a Challenge Cup. The fellow was quite honest about it."

"A more thoughtful man," the lady insisted, "would have consulted his wife—would have brought the thing home, maybe, for a trial, to have her opinion on it. The others wouldn't have raised any objection, I'm sure. And," she concluded with another sigh, "he knows that I fairly dote on music!"

"If that's so, ma'am," began Captain Cai, and hesitated, overtaken by sudden caution, "I might let you have the loan of it, some time."

"You got out o' that very well," said Tobias, as they moved on. "I like this place ——" He paused, to scan a bill hoarding. "I likes it the more the further I gets. But the women hereabouts seem more than usual forward. Which an unprejoodiced man might call it a drawback."

"I'm sorry, 'Bias, she would keep talkin' about the darned box. . . . I couldn' prevent the lads, d'ye see — not knowin' they'd any such thing in their minds."

"She as good as invited herself to call an' listen to it," Tobias pursued stolidly. "You headed her off very well. 'Tis possible, o' course, we may get tired o' the tunes in time; an' then she may be welcome to it for a spell. We'll see. Plenty o' time for that when we've done listenin' to it together."

Captain Cai halted and gazed at his friend with an emotion too deep for words. But Tobias did not see: he was staring up at a wire which crossed the street overhead.

"Telephone! What next? . . . You never told me, neither —or not to my recollection—as you went in for speech-makin'."

"But I don't. I—er—the fact is, I had thoughts of takin' a lesson or two. Private lessons, you understand."

"You don't need to, so far as I can see. What was it I heard you tellin' that widow-woman?—'You was made the recipient — of sentiments — which emanated'— that's the way to talk to 'em in public life. I can reckernise the lingo, though I couldn' manage it for worlds, an' don't know as I want to try."

"Troy is my native town, you see," explained Cai, drinking encouragement.

"An' a rattlin' fine one, too!" Tobias halted in front of a wall

letter-box. "Look at that, now! 'Hours of Collection' so-an'-so. It *do* make a difference—fancy a thing o' that sort at sea! . . . D'ye know, although you never expressed yourself that way, I'd always a thought at the back o' my head that you'd end by takin' up with public life in one form or another."

"It *has* been hinted to me," confessed Cai, colouring. "As one might say, it has been—er—"

"Emanated," his friend suggested.

"It has been emanated, then—that there was a thing or two wanted puttin' to rights."

"We'll make notes as we go along."

"But I don't want you to start by lookin' out our little weaknesses!" cried Cai, suddenly fearful for his beloved town.

Nevertheless he was in the seventh heaven, divining that his friend (so chary of speech as a rule) had been trying to make amends, to sweep away the little cloud that for a moment—no more—had crossed their perfect understanding. 'Bias was here, determined to like Troy: and 'Bias was succeeding. What else mattered?

"Tidy little trade here," commented 'Bias, as they reached the Passage Slip and conned the business reach of the river, the vessels alongside the jetties, the cranes at work, the shipping moored off at the buoys—vessels of all nations, but mostly Danes and Russians, awaiting their turn.

"Thirty thousand tons a-month, my boy! See that two-funnelled craft 'longside the second jetty? Six thousand—not a fraction under. We're things o' the past, you an' me, an' 'twas high time we hauled out o' the competition."

"China clay?"

"All of it."

"I don't know much about china clay," said 'Bias reflectively. "But I never met thirty thousand tons of anything where it wasn' time for somebody to protect the public."

"There's a Harbour Commission here, o' course—bye-laws an' all that sort o' thing."

"Ay; there's one openin' for ye. We'll find others."

They resumed their way. The street—Troy has but one street, but makes up for this by calling various lengths of it by various names—was in places so narrow that to avoid passing vehicles they were forced to take refuge in handy doorways. In three out of four the door stood open, and Captain Cai, popping his head in at kitchen or small parlour, would beg pardon for intruding, pass the time of day with the mistress of the house, inquire for her husband's health—"Do I remember him, I wonder?"—and how many children there were, and what might be their ages? He always wound up by introducing his friend. Nobody resented these salutations, these questions. Indeed how was it possible to be morose with Captain Cai?—he bubbled such transparent gaiety, kindliness, innocence.

"'Tis our way in Troy, you see," he told 'Bias as they dived into a cobbler's shop to escape the omnibus. "You have to be neighbourly if you don't want to be run over. . . . In London, now, you'd waste a lot o' time explainin' that you didn' want your boots mended."

"It's like what I've heard about canvassin' for Parlyment," said 'Bias. "And that's another suggestion for ye."

Of the most important shops in the length of thoroughfare known as Fore Street and in Church Square (which is the same street with a corkscrew twist in it) 'Bias showed much appreciation. He was especially allured by the rainbow-tinted goods in Mr Shake Benny's window, and by the cards recommending them for sale. *If you Admire Lord Rosebery, Now is Your Time*— He studied this for some moments.

"Time for what?" he asked, rubbing his ear softly.

"Drinks," suggested Cai, and laughed in pure pleasure of heart. "Come along, man—or you'll be makin' me Prime Minister before we get to the Ship. . . . Yes, yon's the church—Established. You can tell by the four spikes an' the weathercock; likewise by the tombstones. But they bury folks up the hill nowadays." He paused — "That reminds me"—he paused again.

"What of?"

"Oh—er—nothing; nothing particular. . . . Well, if you must know, I was thinkin' about that old hat o' mine."

"You don't tell me you've buried it?"

"No."

"It *is* time for drinks," said 'Bias with decision.

They called at the Ship Inn, where they ascertained that Captain Hunken's chest and parrot-cage had been duly delivered.

"Very decent beer," pronounced 'Bias as they shared a quart.

"When a man has a job to tackle——" began Cai, and glanced at his friend. "You're sure we hadn' better wait till you've had a meal?—till tomorrow mornin' if you like."

'Bias drained his tankard and arose—a giant visibly refreshed. "I'm a-goin' to see the house, instanter."

"Things," said Cai, "strike different parties from different points o' view. That's notorious. One man's born an' bred in a place, and another isn't. . . . Now if the latter — as we'll call him for argyment's sake——"

But 'Bias, cutting short this parley, had gained the door and was marching forth.

To be sure (and Captain Cai might with better command on his nerves have hailed the omen) Nature could hardly have dressed shore and harbour of Troy in weather more auspicious. The smoke of chimneys arose straight on the "cessile air," making a soft dun-coloured haze through which the light of the declining day was filtered in streams of yellow—pale lemon-yellow, golden-yellow, orange, orange-

tawny. On the far shore of the harbour, windows blazed as if cottage after cottage held the core of a furnace intense and steady. The green hillside above them lay bathed in this aureate flush, which permeated too the whole of the southern sky, up to its faint blue zenith.

"Pretty weather," grunted 'Bias, "I see the glass is steady too; leastways if you can trust the one they keep in the Inn parlour."

Cai did not respond: the crucial moment was drawing too near.

"Pretty li'l view, too. . . . A man with a box o' paints, now, might be tempted to have a slap at it."

Well-meant but artless simulation! Captain Hunken had once in his life purchased a picture; it represented Vesuvius by night, in eruption, and he had yielded to the importunity of the Neapolitan artist —or, rather, had excused himself for yielding — on the ground that after all you couldn't mistake the dam thing for anything else.

They came abreast of Harbour Terrace. They were passing by the green front door of Number Two. Still Captain Cai made no sign.

"There's a house, f'r instance—supposin' a man could afford the rental——" 'Bias halted and regarded it. "Hullo, 'tis unoccupied!" He turned about slowly. "You don't — mean — to tell me—as that's *of* it?"

"That's *of* it," Cai admitted tremulously. After a long pause, "'Bias," he stammered, "break it gently."

"I'm tryin' to," said 'Bias, breathing and backing to the railings for a better view. He removed his hat and wiped the top of his head several times around. Then of a sudden—

"Hooray!" he exploded.

"'Bias!" Cai stared, as well he might, for his friend's face was totally impassive.

"Hoo——" began 'Bias again. "Who the devil's this?" he demanded, as the door opened and Tabb's child appeared in the entry.

"I been expectin' you this hour an' more," announced Tabb's child. "Stoppin' for drinks on the road, I reckon?"

"We did take a drink, now you mention it," stammered Captain Cai, caught aback: "though, as it happens that don't account for our bein' late. But what brings *you* here, missy?"

She laid a finger on her lip. "Sh! I've got 'em."

"Got what?"

"Servants for 'ee. They're inside." She pointed back in to the passage mysteriously.

"Who's this child?" demanded Captain 'Bias.

"She's—er—a young friend o' mine——" began Captain Cai. But Fancy interrupted him, dropping a slight curtsey, and addressing his friend straight.

"My name's Fancy Tabb, sir. Which I hope you'll like Troy, and Cap'n Hocken ast me to make myself useful an' find you a pair of servants—woman an' boy."

"Oh, but hold hard!" pro-

tested Captain Cai. "We haven't started furnishin' yet."

She nodded. "That's all right. No hurry with either of 'em—not for some weeks, or so long as it suits you. But you'll be safer to bespeak 'em: an' Mrs Bowldler is the chance of a lifetime."

She led the way through to the unfurnished and somewhat dingy kitchen. It had a low window-seat, from the extreme ends of which, as the two skippers entered, two figures—a middle-aged woman and a gawky lad—arose and saluted them; the one with a highly genteel curtsey, the other with an awkward half-pull at his forelock, and much scraping with his feet.

"This is Mrs Bowldler," Fancy nodded towards the middle-aged woman.

"Your servant, sirs," Mrs Bowldler curtseyed again and coughed. "With a W if you don't object."

"She's quite a good plain cook; and well connected, though reduced in circumstances. Mr Rogers, sir, is often glad to employ her at a pinch."

"At a what?" asked Captain Tobias, breathing hard.

"Which," said Mrs Bowldler with a trembling cough, "the bare thought of taking service again with two strange gentlemen in my state of health is a nordeal, and as such I put it to you." Here she smoothed the front of her gown and turned upon Tobias with unexpected spirit. "You can say to me what you like, sir, and you can do to me what you like, but if you'd been laying awake all night with geese walking over your grave, I'd put myself in your place and say, 'Well, if he don't spit blood 'tis a mercy!'"

"Plain cookin', did you say?" asked Captain Tobias, turning stonily upon the girl.

"And knick-knacks. You mustn't mind her talk, sir: she was brought up to better things and 'tis only her tricks. . . . Now the boy here—his name's Pam, which is short for Palmerston: and I can't conscientiously say more for him, except that he's willin' and tells me he can carry coals."

She might not be able to say more for him, and yet her voice had a wistfulness it had lacked while she commended Mrs Bowldler. Certainly the lad's looks did not take the casual glance. He was coltish and angular, with timid, hare-like eyes. He wore corduroy trousers (very short in the leg), a coat which had patently been made for a grown man, and in place of waistcoat a crimson guernsey which as patently was a piece of feminine apparel. The sleeves of his coat were folded back above his wrists, and in his hand he dangled, by a string of elastic, a girl's sailor hat.

"Healthy?" asked Captain Tobias.

As if at a military command, the boy put out his tongue.

"La!" exclaimed Mrs Bowldler, "look at that for manners!"

"Where does he come from?"

The boy glanced at Fancy in

a helpless way. Fancy was prompt. "'Twould save time — wouldn't it? — now that you've seen Mrs Bowldler, if she went round an' had a look at the house?"

"Which I trust," said Mrs Bowldler, "it would not be required of me to sleep in a nattic. It's not that I'm peculiar, but as I said to my sister Martha at breakfast only this morning, 'Attics I was never accustomed to, and if 'tis to be attics at my age, with the roof on your head all the time and not a wink in consequence, Martha,' I said, 'you wouldn't ask it of me, no, not to oblige all the retired gentlemen in Christendom.'"

"You'd better trot along upstairs, then, an' make sure," said Fancy. As soon as the woman was gone she jerked a nod towards the door. "Now we can talk. I didn't want *her* to know, but Pam comes from the Work'ouse. His father was mate of a vessel an' drowned at sea, and his mother couldn't manage alone."

"What vessel?" asked Captain Cai. Both skippers were regarding the boy with interest.

"The *Tartar Girl* — one of Mr Rogers's—with coal from South Shields, but a Troy crew. It happened five years ago; an' last night when you said you wanted a boy it came into my head that one of the Burts would be just about the age. [Pam's other name is Burt, but I didn't tell it just now, not wanting Mrs Bowldler to guess who he was.] So this morning I got Mr Rogers to let me telephone to Tregarrick Work-'ouse—an' here he is."

"Do they dress 'em like that in there?" asked Captain Cai.

"Better fit they did!" said the girl angrily. "They sent him over in a clean corduroy suit with 'Work'ouse' written all over it: and a nice job I had to rig him up so's Mrs Bowldler shouldn' guess."

At this moment a piercing scream interrupted Fancy's explanation. It came from one of the front rooms, and was followed by another shorter scream — the voice unmistakably Mrs Bowldler's.

Running to the lady's rescue, they found her in the empty parlour — alone, clutching at the mantelshelf with both hands, and preparing to emit another cry for succour.

"What in the world's happened?" demanded Fancy, the first to arrive.

"There was a man!" Mrs Bowldler ran her eyes over her protectors and turned them, with a slow shudder, towards the window. "I seen him distinctly. It sent my blood all of a cream."

"A man? What was he doing?" they asked.

"He was a-looking in boldly through the window . . ." Mrs Bowldler covered her face with her hands.

"Well?" Fancy prompted her impatiently, while Captain Cai stepped out to the front door in quest of the apparition.

"He had on a great black hat. I thought 'twas Death itself come after me!"

While Mrs Bowldler paused

to take breath and record her further emotions, Captain Cai, reaching the front door, threw it open, looked out into the roadway, and recoiled with a start. Close on his right a man in black stood peering, as Mrs Bowldler had described, but now into the drawing-room window; shielding, for a better view, the brim of a tall hat which Captain Cai recognised with an exclamation—

"Mr Philp!"

Mr Philp withdrew his gaze, turned about and nodded without embarrassment.

"Good evenin', Cap'n. Friend arrived?"

"Funny way to behave, isn't it?" asked Captain Cai with sternness. "Pokin' an' pryin' in at somebody else's windows—what makes ye do it?"

"I was curious to know what might be goin' on inside."

There was a finality about this which held Captain Cai gravelled for a moment. It hardly seemed to admit of a reply. At length he said—

"Well, you've frightened a woman into hysterics by it, if that's any consolation."

"There, now! Mrs Bosenna?"

"No, it was not Mrs Bosenna. . . . By the way, that reminds me. I've changed my mind over that hat."

"Hey?"

"I find I've a use for it, after all."

But at this moment 'Bias appeared in the doorway behind him.

"Seen anything?" demanded 'Bias.

"Interduce me," said Mr Philp with majestic calm.

Captain Cai, caught in this act of secret traffic, blushed in his confusion, but obeyed.

"'Bias," said he, "this is the gentleman that caused the mischief inside. His name's Philp, and he'd like to make your acquaintance."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IX.—FIRST SUSPICIONS.

It was August, and the weather for weeks had been superb. It was also the week of Troy's annual regatta, and a whole fleet of yachts lay anchored in the little harbour, getting ready their riding lights. Two or three belated ones—like large white moths in the grey offing—had yet to make the rendezvous, and were creeping towards it with all canvas piled: for the wind—light and variable all day—had now at sunset dropped almost to a flat calm.

"A few pounds to be picked up out yonder," commented Captain Cai, "if the tugs had any enterprise."

Captain 'Bias reached out a hand for the telescope. "That yawl—the big fellow—'d do better to take in her jib-tops'le. The faster it's pullin' her through the water the more

it's pullin' her to leeward. She'd set two p'ints nigher with it down."

"The fella can't make up his mind about it, either: keeps it shakin' half the time."

The two friends sat in 'Bias's summerhouse, the scent of their tobacco mingling, while they discoursed, with the fragrance of late roses, nicotianas, lemon verbenas. "Discoursed," did I say? Well, let the word pass: for their talk was discursive enough. But when at intervals one or the other opened his mouth, his utterance, though it took the form of a comment upon men and affairs, was in truth but the breathing of a deep inward content. On the table between them Captain Cai's musical-box tinkled the waltz from "Faust."

They had become house-occupiers early in May, and at first with a few bare sticks of furniture a-piece. But by dint of steady attendance at the midsummer auctions they had since done wonders. Captain Cai had acquired, among other things, a refrigerator, a linen-press, and a set of 'The Encyclopædia Britannica' (edition of 1881); Captain 'Bias a poultry run (in sections) and a framed engraving of "The Waterloo Banquet,"—of which, strange to say, he found himself possessor directly through his indifference to art; for, oppressed by the heat of the saleroom, he had yielded to brief slumber (on his legs) while the pictures were being disposed of, and awaking at the sound of his own name was aware that he had secured this bargain by an untimely and unpremeditated nod.

Such small accidents, however, are a part of the fun of house-furnishing. On the whole our two friends had bought judiciously, and now looking around them, could say that their experiment had hitherto prospered; that, so far, the world was kind.

Especially were they fortunate (thanks to Fancy Tabb) precisely where bachelor householders are apt to miss good fortune — in the matter of domestic service. The boy Palmerston, to be sure, suffered from a trick—acquired (Fancy assured them) under workhouse treatment and eradicable by time and gentle handling—of bursting into tears upon small provocation or none. But Mrs Bowldler was a treasure. Of this there could be no manner of doubt; and in nothing so patently as in relation with the boy Palmerston did the gold in Mrs Bowldler's nature — the refined gold — reveal itself.

It was suspected that she had once been a kitchen-maid in the West End of London: but a discreet veil hung over this past, and she never lifted it save by whatever of confession might be read into the words, "When we were in residence in Eaton Square,"—with which she preluded all reminiscences (and they were frequent) of the great metropolis. Her true test as a good woman she passed when—although she must have known the truth, being a confirmed innocent gossip—she chose to

extend the same veil, or a corner of it, over the antecedents of Palmerston. She said—

"The past is often enveloped. In the best families it is notoriously so. We know what we are, an' may speckilate on what we was; but what we're to be, who can possibly tell? It might give us the creeps."

She said again: "Every man carries a button in his knapsack, by which he may rise sooner or later to higher things. It was said by a Frenchman, and a politer nation you would not find."

Again: "Blood will tell, always supposin' you 'ave it, and will excuse the expression."

Thus did Mrs Bowldler "turn her necessity to glorious gain," colouring and enlarging her sphere of service under the prismatic lens of romance. In her conversation either cottage became a "residence," and its small garden "the grounds," thus:—

"Palmerston, inform Captain Hunken that dinner is served. You will find him in the grounds."

Or, "Where's that boy?" Captain Cai might ask.

"Palmerston, sir? He is at present in the adjacent, cleaning the knives and forks."

She had indeed set this high standard of expression in the very act of taking service; when, being asked what wages she demanded, she answered, "If acceptable to you, sir, I would intimate eighteen guineas —and my viands."

"That's two shilling short o' nineteen pound," said Captain Hunken.

"I thank you, sir"—Mrs Bowldler made obeisance—"but I have an attachment to guineas."

She identified herself with her employers by speaking of them in the first person plural: "No, we do not dress for dinner. Our rule is to dine in the middle of the day, as more agreeable to health." [A sigh.] "Sometimes I wish we could persuade ourselves that vegetables look better on the side-table."

Such was Mrs Bowldler: and her housekeeping, no less vigilant than romantic, protected our two friends from a thousand small domestic cares.

"Committee-meeting, to-night?" asked 'Bias.

"Eight o'clock: to settle up details—mark-boats, handicap, and the like. . . . It's a wonder to me," said Cai reflectively, "how this regatta has run on, year after year. With Bussa for secretary, if you can understand such madness."

"They'll be runnin' you for the next Parish Council, sure as fate."

Cai ignored this. "There's the fireworks, too. Nobody chosen yet to superintend 'em, an' who's to do it I don't know, unless I take over that little job in addition."

"I thought the firm always sent a couple o' hands to fix an' let 'em off."

"So it does. They arrived a couple of hours ago—both drunk as Chloe."

"Plenty o' time to sleep it

off between this an' then," opined 'Bias comfortably.

"But they're still *on* the drink. Likely as not we shall find 'em to-morrow in Highway lock-up, which is four miles from here. . . . It happened once before," said Cai with a face of gloom, "and Bussa did the whole display by himself."

"Good Lord! How did it go off?"

"He can't remember, except that it *did* go off. *He* was drunk, too — drunk o' purpose: for, as he says very reas'nably, 'twas the only way he could find the courage. The fellow isn' without public spirit, if he'd only apply it the right way. Toy tells me that he, for his part, saw it from his bedroom window—the Town Quay wasn't safe, wi' the rocket-sticks fairly rainin'—an' the show wasn' a bad show, *if you looked at it horizontal;* but the gentry on the yachts derived next to no enjoyment from it, bein' occupied in gettin' up their anchors."

Before 'Bias could comment on this, a footstep—light, yet audible between the tinkling notes of the musical-box—drew the gaze of the pair to a small window on the right, outside of which lay the gravelled approach to their bower.

"May I come in?" asked a voice — a woman's — with a pretty hesitation in its note: and Mrs Bosenna stood in the doorway.

"*Please* keep your seats," she entreated as both arose awkwardly. She added with a mirthful little laugh, "I heard the musical-box playing away, and so I took French leave. Now don't tell me that I'm an intruder! It is only for a few minutes; and—strictly speaking, you know—the lease says I may enter at any reasonable time. Is this a reasonable time?"

They assured her, but still awkwardly, that she was welcome at any time. Captain Cai found her a chair.

"So this," she said, looking around, "is where you sit together and talk disparagingly of our sex. At least, that's what Dinah assures me, though I don't see how she can possibly know."

"Ma'am!" said Cai, "we were talkin', this very moment, o' fireworks: nothing more an' nothing less."

"Well, and you couldn't have been talking of anything more to the point," said Mrs Bosenna; "for, as it happens, it's fireworks that brought me here."

'Bias looked vaguely skyward, while "You don't tell me, ma'am, those fellows are makin' trouble down in the town?" cried Cai.

"Eh? I don't understand. . . . Oh, no," she laughed when he explained his alarm, "I am afraid my errand is much more selfish. You see, I positively dote on fireworks."

She paused.

"Well," said 'Bias, "that's womanlike."

"Hallo!" said Cai. "How do you know what's womanlike?"

"I am afraid it is womanlike," confessed Mrs Bosenna

hastily. "And from Rilla Farm you get no view at all on Regatta night. So I was wondering—if you won't think it dreadfully forward of me——"

"You're welcome to watch 'em from here, ma'am, if that's what you mean," said 'Bias.

"Or from my garden, ma'am, if you prefer it," said Cai.

"Why should she?" asked 'Bias.

"Well, 'tis a yard or two nearer, for one thing."

"Anything else?"

"Yes: the other summer-house fronts a bit more up the harbour; t'wards the fireworks, that's to say."

"You ought to know: *you* chose it. . . . But anyway I asked her first."

"Thank you — thank you both!" interposed Mrs Bosenna, leaving the question open. "And may I bring Dinah too? She's almost as silly about fireworks as I am, poor woman! and life on a farm *can* be dull." She sighed, and added, "Besides, 'twould be more proper. We mustn't set people talking—eh, Captain Hocken?" She appealed to him with a laugh.

"Cai won't be here," announced 'Bias heavily.

"Who said so?" demanded Cai.

"'Said so yourself, not twenty minutes ago. . . . 'Said you didn' know how the fireworks was ever goin' off without you, or words to that effect. I didn' make no comment at the time. All I say now is, if Mrs Bosenna comes here to see fireworks, she'll expect 'em to go off: an' I leave it at that."

"They'll go off, all right," said Cai cheerfully, putting a curb on his temper. [But what ailed 'Bias to-night?] "I'll get a small Sub-committee appointed this very evening. But about takin' a hand myself, I've changed my mind."

"Indeed, Captain Hocken, I hope you'll not desert the party," said Mrs Bosenna prettily, and laughed again. "Do you know that, having made so bold I've a mind to make bolder yet, and pretend I am entertaining *you* to-morrow. It's the only chance you give me, you two."

She said this with her eyes on 'Bias, who started as if stung and glanced first at her, then at Cai. But Cai observed nothing, being occupied at the moment in winding up the musical-box, which had run down.

Mrs Bosenna smiled a demure smile. She had discovered what she had come to learn; and having discovered it, she presently took her leave, with a promise to be punctual on the morrow.

When she was gone the pair sat for some time in silence. *Tink, tink-tink-a-tink, tink,* went the musical-box on the table. . . . At length Cai stood up.

"Time to be gettin' along to Committee," he said, and stepped to the doorway; but there he turned and faced about. "'Bias——"

"Eh?"

"You don't really think as I chose th' other summer-house because it had a better view?"

"*Has* it a better view?" asked 'Bias.

"For fireworks, it seems," said Cai sadly. "But I reckoned—though I hate to talk about it—as this one looked straighter out to sea an' by consequence 'd please ye better. That's why. . . . You're welcome to change gardens to-morrow."

"Mrs Bosenna's comin' to-morrow," grunted 'Bias, and then, after a second's pause, swore under his breath, yet audibly.

"What's the matter with ye, 'Bias?"

"I don't know. . . . Maybe 'tis that box o' tunes gets on my temper. No, don't take it away. I didn' mean it like that, an' the music used to be pretty enough, first-along."

"We'll give it a spell," said Cai, stooping and switching off the tune. "I'm not musical myself; I'd as lief hear thunder, most days. But the thing was well meant."

"Ay, an' no doubt we'll pick up a taste for it again—indoors of an evenin' when the winter comes 'round."

"Tell ye what," suggested Cai. "To-morrow, I'll take it off to John Peter and ask him to put a brass plate on the lid, with an inscription. He's clever at such things, an' terrible dilatory. . . . An' to-night Mrs Bowldler can have it in the kitchen. She dotes on it—'*I dreamt that I dwelt*' in particular."

"Which," said Mrs Bowldler to Palmerston later on, as they sat drinking in that ditty one on either side of the kitchen table, "it can't sing, but the words is that I dreamt I dwelt in Marble Halls with Princes and Peers by my si-i-ide—just like that. Princes!" She leaned back in the cheap chair and closed her eyes. "It goes through me to this day. I used to sing it frequent in my 'teens, along with another popular favourite which was quite at the other end of the social scale, but artless—'My Mother said that I never should Play with the gypsies In the wood. If I did, She would say, Tum tiddle, tum tiddle, tum-ti-tay'—my memory is not what it was." Mrs Bowldler wiped her eyes.

"And did you?" asked Palmerston. "Tell me what happened."

Next morning, while the Church bells were ringing in Regatta Day, Captain Cai tucked the musical-box under his arm and called, on his way to the Committee Ship, upon Mr John Peter Nanjulian (commonly "John Peter" for short).

John Peter, an elderly man, dwelt with a yet more elderly sister, in an old roomy house set eminently on the cliff-side above the roofs of the Lower Town, approachable only by a pathway broken by flights of steps, and known by the singular name of On the Wall.

The house had been a family mansion, and still preserved traces of ancient dignity, albeit jostled by cottages which had climbed the slope and encroached nearer and nearer

as the Nanjulians under stress of poverty had parted with parcel after parcel of their terraced garden. Of the last generation—five sons and three daughters, not one of whom had married—John Peter and his sister "Miss Susan" were now the only survivors, and lived, each on a small annuity, under the old roof, meeting only at dinner on Sundays, and for the rest of the week dwelling apart in their separate halves of the roomy building, up and down the wide staircase of which they had once raced as children at hide-and-seek with six playmates.

John Peter was eccentric, as all these later Nanjulians had been: a lean, stooping man, with a touch of breeding in his face, a weak mouth, and a chin dotted with tufts of gray hair which looked as if they had been affixed with gum and absent-mindedly. He was reputed to be a great reader, and could quote the poetical works of Pope by the yard. He had some skill with the pencil and the water-colour brush. He understood and could teach the theory of navigation; dabbled in chess problems; and had once constructed an astronomical timepiece. His not-too-clean hands were habitually stained with acids: for he practised etching, too, although his plates invariably went wrong. He had considerable skill in engraving upon brass and copper, and was not above eking out his income by inscribing coffin-plates. But the undertaker was shy of employing him because he could never be hurried.

John Peter received Captain Cai in his workshop—a room ample enough for a studio and lit by a large window that faced north, but darkened by cobwebs, dirty, and incredibly littered with odds and ends of futile apparatus. He put a watchmaker's glass to his eye and peered long into the bowels of the musical-box.

"The works are clogged with dust," he announced. "Fairly caked with oil and dirt. No wonder it won't go."

"But it *does* go," objected Captain Cai.

"You don't tell me! . . . Well, you'd best let me take out the works, any way, and give them a bath of paraffin."

"Is it so serious as all that? . . . What I came about now, was to ask you to make a brass plate for the lid—with an inscription." Captain Cai pulled out a scrap of paper. "Something like this, 'Presented to Caius Hocken, Master of the *Hannah Hoo*, on the Occasion of his Retirement. By his affectionate undersigned': then the names, with maybe a motto or a verse o' poetry if space permits."

"What sort of poetry?"

"Eh? . . . 'Tell ye the truth, I didn' know till this moment that there *were* different sorts. Well, we'll have the best."

"Why not go to Benny, and get him to fix you up something appropriate?" suggested John Peter. "Old Benny, I mean, that writes the letters for

seamen. He's a dab at verses. People go to him regular for the In-Memoriams they put in the newspaper."

"That's an idea, too," said Captain Cai. "I'll consult him to-morrow. But that won't hinder your getting ahead wi' the plate?" he added; for John Peter's ways were notorious.

"How would you like it?" John Peter looked purblindly about him, rubbing his spectacles with a threadbare coat-tail.

"Well, I don't mind," said Cai with promptitude. "Though 'tis rather early in the morning."

"Old English?"

"Perhaps I don't know it by that name."

"Or there's Plain."

"Not for me, thank ye."

"— Or again, there's Italic; to my mind the best of all. It lends itself to little twiddles and flourishes, according to your taste." Old John Peter led him to the wall and pointed with a dirty finger; and Cai gasped, finding his attention directed to a line of engraved coffin-plates.

"That's Italic," said John Peter, selecting an inscription and tracing over the flourishes with his thumb-nail. "'*William Penwarne, b. 1837* ——' that's the year the Queen came to the throne. It's easier to read, you see, than old English, and far easier than what we call Gothic, or Ecclesiastical — which is another variety — though, of course, not so easy as Plain. Here you have Plain ——" He indicated an inscription — "Samuel Bosenna, of Rilla, b. 1830, d. 1895."

"Would that be th' old fellow up the valley, as was?— Mrs Bosenna's husband?" asked Cai, somewhat awed.

"That's the man."

"But what's it doing here?"

"'Tis my unfortunate propensity," confessed John Peter with simple frankness. "You see, by the nature of things these plates must be engraved in a hurry—I *quite* see it from the undertaker's point of view. But, on the other hand, if you're an artist, it isn't always you feel in the mood; you wait for what they call inspiration, and then the undertaker gets annoyed and throws the thing back on your hands." With a pathetic, patient smile John Peter rubbed his spectacles again, and again adjusted them. "Perhaps you'd like Plain, after all?" he suggested. "It usually doesn't take me so long."

"No," decided Cai somewhat hurriedly; "it might remind— I mean, there isn't the same kind of hurry with a musical-box."

"It would be much the better for a bath of paraffin," muttered John Peter, prying into the works. But Cai continued to stare at the plate on the wall, and was staring at it when a voice at the door called "Good mornin'!" and Mr Philp entered.

"Ho!" said Mr Philp, "I didn' know as you two were acquainted. And what might *you* be doin' here, cap'n?"

"A triflin' matter of business, that's all," answered Cai,

who chafed under Mr Philp's inquisitiveness; but chafed, like everybody else, in vain.

"Orderin' your breastplate? . . . It's well to be in good time when you're dealin' with John Peter," said Mr Philp with dreadful jocularity. "As I came along the head o' the town," he explained, "I heard that Snell's wife had passed away in the night. A happy release. I dropped in to see if they'd given you the job."

John Peter shook his head.

"And I don't suppose you'll get it, neither," said Mr Philp; "but I wanted to make sure. Push,—that's what you want. That's the only thing nowadays. Push. . . . You're lookin' at John Peter's misfits, I see," he went on, turning to Cai. "Now, *there's* a man whose place, as you might say, won't go unfilled much longer —hey?" Mr Philp pointed his walking-stick at the name of the late owner of Rilla, and achieved a sort of watery wink.

"I daresay you mean something by that, Mr Philp," said Cai, staring at him, half angry and completely puzzled. "But be dashed if I know what you *do* mean."

"There now! And I reck'ned as you an' Cap'n Hunken had ne'er a secret you didn't share!"

"'Bias?" asked Cai slowly. "Who was talkin' of 'Bias?"

"It takes 'em that way sometimes," said Mr Philp, wiping a rheumy eye. "An' the longer they puts it off the more you can't never tell which way it will take 'em. O' course, if Cap'n Hunken didn't tell you he'd been visitin' Rilla lately, he must have had his reasons, an' I'm sorry I spoke."

Cai was breathing hard. "Bias? . . . When?"

"The last time I spied him was two days ago . . . in the late afternoon. Now you come to mention it, I'd a notion at the time he wasn't anxious to be seen. For he came over the fields at the back—across the ten-acre field that Mrs Bosenna carried last week—and a very tidy crop, I'm told, though but moderate long in the stalk. . . . Well, there he was comin' across the stubble — at a fine pace, too, with his coat 'pon his arm—when as I guess he spied me down in the road below and stopped short, danderin' about an' pretendin' to poke up weeds with his stick. 'Some new-fashioned farmin',' thought I; 'weedin' stubble, and in August month too! I wonder who taught the Widow that trick' —for I won't be sure I reckernised your friend, not slap-off. But Cap'n Hunken it was: for to make certain I called and had a drink o' cider with Farmer Middlecoat, t'other side of the hill, an' *he'd* seen your friend frequent these last few weeks. . . . There now, you don't seem pleased about it!— an' yet 'twould be a very good match for him, if it came off."

Cai's head was whirling. He steadied himself to say, "You seem to take a lot of interest, Mr Philp, in other people's affairs."

"Heaps," said Mr Philp. "I couldn' live without it."

CHAPTER X.—REGATTA NIGHT.

It must be admitted, though with sorrow, that on the Committee Ship that day Captain Cai did not shine. He bungled two "flying starts" by nervously playing with his stop-watch and throwing it out of gear; he fired off winning guns for several hopelessly belated competitors; he made at least three mistakes in distributing the prize-money (and nobody who has not committed the indiscretion of paying out a first prize to a crew which has actually come in third can conceive the difficulty of enforcing its surrender); finally, he provoked something like a free fight on deck by inadvertently crediting two boats each with the other's time on a close handicap. It was the more vexatious, because he had in committee meetings taken so many duties upon himself, virtually cashiering many old hands, whose enforced idleness left them upon the ship with a run of the drinks, and whose resentment (as the day wore on) made itself felt in galling comments while, with no offer to help, they stood by and watched each painful development. The worst moment arrived when Captain Cai, who had replaced the old treasurer by a new and pushing man, and had, further, carried a resolution that prizes for all the major events should be paid by cheque, discovered his *protégé* to be too tipsy to sign his name. This truly terrible emergency Captain Cai met by boldly subscribing his own name to the cheques. They would be drawn, of course, upon his private account, and he trusted the Committee to recoup him, while reading in the eyes of one or two that they had grasped this opportunity of revenge. But Regatta Day happens on a Wednesday, when the banks in Troy close early; and these cheques were accepted with an unflattering show of suspicion.

The longest day, however, has its end. All these vexations served at least to distract our friend's mind from the morning's discovery; and when at length, the last gun fired, he dropped into a boat to be pulled for shore, he was too far exhausted physically—having found scarcely a moment for bite or sup—to load his mind any more than did Walton's milkmaid "with any fears of many things that will never be."

He reached home, washed off the cares of the day and the reek of black gunpowder together in a warm bath, dressed himself with more than ordinary spruceness, and was descending the stair on his way to 'Bias's garden, when at the foot of them he was amazed to find Mrs Bowldler, seated and rocking herself to and fro with her apron cast over her head. Nay, in the dusk of the staircase he but just missed turning a somersault over her.

"Hullo! Why, what's the matter, missus?"

"Oh — oh!" sobbed Mrs Bowldler. "Bitter is the bread of poverty, deny it who can! And me, that have gone about Troy streets in my time with one pound fifteen's worth of feathers on my hat! Ostrich. And now to be laying a table for the likes of *her*, that before our reverses I wouldn't have seen in the street when I passed her!"

Captain Cai, already severely shaken by the events of the day, put a hand to his head.

"For goodness' sake, woman, talk sense to me! *Who* is it you're meanin'?—Mrs Bosenna? And what's this talk about layin' table?"

"Mrs Bosenna?" echoed Mrs Bowldler, who had by this time arisen from the stair. She drew her skirts close with a gesture of dignity. "It is not for me to drag Mrs Bosenna into our conversation, sir—far from it,—and I hope I know my place better. For aught I know, Captain Hocken — if, as a *menial*, I may use the term——"

"Not at all," said Captain Cai vaguely, as she paused with elaborate humility.

"For aught that I know, sir, Mrs Bosenna may be a Duchess fresh dropped from heaven. I *have* heard it mentioned in a casual way that she came from Holsworthy in Devon, and (unless my memory deceives me, sir) nothing relative to Duchesses was dropped —or not at the time, at least. But I pass no remarks on Mrs Bosenna. If she chose to marry an old man with her eyes open, it's not for me to cast it up, beyond saying that some folks know on which side their bread 's buttered. *I* never dragged in Mrs Bosenna. You will do me that justice, I hope?"

"Then who the dickens is it you're talkin' about?"

"Which to mention any names, sir, it is not my desire; and the best of us can't help how we was born nor in what position. But farm service is farm service, call it what you please; and if a party as shall be nameless starts sitting down with her betters, perhaps you will tell me when and where the world is going to end? That, sir, is the very question I put to Captain Hunken; and with all respect, sir, 'dammit' doesn't meet the case."

"Perhaps not," agreed Captain Caie, but not with entire conviction.

"It was all the answer Captain Hunken gave me, sir. 'Dammit,' he says, 'Mrs Bowldler, go and lay supper as I tell you, and we'll talk later——'"

"Supper? Where?"

"In the summer-house, sir: which it's not for me to talk about taking freaks into your head, and the spiders about, or the size o' them at this time o' the year. Captain Hunken and the lady and the other party are at present in your portion of the grounds, hoping that you'll join them in time for the fireworks; which it all depends if you

like mixed company. And afterwards the guests"—Mrs Bowldler threw withering scorn into the word—"the guests is to adjourn to Captain Hunken's summer-house or what not, there to partake of supper. And if I'm asked to wait, sir," she concluded, "I must beg to give notice on the grounds that I'm only flesh and blood."

"O-oh!" said Captain Cai reflectively. It occurred to him that 'Bias had hit on a compromise with some tact. For the moment he was not thinking of Mrs Bowldler, and did not grasp the full meaning of her ultimatum.

She repeated it.

"Tut—tut," said he. "Who wants you to wait table against your will? The boy'll do well enough."

"Which," said Mrs Bowldler, "I have took the opportunity of sounding Palmerston, and he offers no objection."

"Very well, then."

Mrs Bowldler was visibly relieved. She heaved a sigh and fired a parting shot.

"I can only trust," she said, "if Palmerston waits as he'll catch up with no low tricks. Boys are so receptive!"

Cai descended to his garden, and at the foot of it found a trio of dark figures by the low fence of the edge of the cliff—'Bias and Mrs Bosenna in talk together, Dinah standing a little apart. "But that," thought he, "is only her place, as I've just been hearing." He had a just mind and was slow to suspect. Even now he could not assimilate the poison of Mr Philp's story. Everybody knew Mr Philp and his propensities. As Mr Toy the barber was wont to say, "Philp don't mean any harm: he just makes mischief like a bee makes honey."

So Cai said, "Cheer-o, 'Bias!"—his usual greeting—hoped he saw Mrs Bosenna well, and fell in on the other side of her by the breast-rail. The sky by this time was almost pitch dark, with a star or two shining between somewhat heavy masses of clouds. He begged Mrs Bosenna to be sure that she was comfortably anchored, as he put it. The rail was stout and secure; she might lean her weight against it without fear. He went on to apologise for his late arrival. The Committee Ship had been at sixes and sevens all day.

"Nobody could have guessed it, from the shore," said Mrs Bosenna graciously, and appealed to 'Bias. "Coming through the town I heard it on all hands."

"Not so bad," agreed 'Bias, and this, from him, was real praise.

"'Not a hitch from first to last—the most successful Regatta we've had for years.' Those were the very expressions that reached me."

"We'll do better next time," Cai assured her, swallowing down the flattery. "Believe it or not, I had trouble enough to keep things straight; and being one to fret when they're not ship-shape——"

"*I* know!" murmured Mrs Bosenna sympathetically. "You

could not bear to come away until you'd seen everything through. Well, as it happens, there are people in Troy who recognise this; and it does me good to hear you talk about 'next time.' Though, to be sure, one can't count next time on such perfect weather."

"There'll be rain in half an hour or less," grunted 'Bias.

"Oh, not before the fireworks, surely?" she exclaimed in pretty dismay. "Do say, now, Captain Hocken!"

She turned to Cai, and then—

"Oh — oh!" she cried as, far away up the harbour, the signal rocket shot hissing aloft and exploded with a tremendous detonation. The roar of it filled their ears; but Cai scarcely heeded the roar. It reverberated from shore to shore, and the winding creeks took it up, to re-echo it; but Cai did not hear the echoes.

For (it was no fancy!) a small hand had clutched at his arm out of the darkness and was clinging to it, trembling, for protection. . . . Yes, it trembled there yet! . . . He put a hand over it, to reassure it and at the same time to detain it.

He could not see her face. The rocket was of the kind known as "fog-detonator," and scattered no light with its explosion. He greatly desired to know whether her gaze was turned towards him or up at the dark sky, and this he could not tell. But the hand lay under cover of his arm, and, as moments went by, was not withdrawn. . . .

Half a minute passed thus, and then (oh, drat the fireworks after all!) a salvo of rockets climbed the sky — luminous ones, this time. As they shot up with a *wroo-oo-sh!* the hand was snatched away, gently, swiftly. . . .

They burst in balls of fire — blue, green, yellow, crimson. They lit up the garden so vividly that each separate leaf on the laurustinus bushes cast its own sharp shadow. "O-oh!" breathed Mrs Bosenna, but now on a very different note, and as though her whole spirit drank deep, quenching a celestial desire. Cai, stealing a look, saw her profile irradiated, her gaze uplifted to the zenith.

The fiery shower died out, was extinct. Across the party hedge the boy Palmerston was heard inquiring if that was the way the angels behaved in heaven.

"Moderately so," responded the polite, high-pitched voice of Mrs Bowldler (who never could resist fireworks). "Moderately so, but without the accompanyin' igsplosion. That is, so far as we are permitted to guess. . . . And highly creditable to *them*," it wound up, with sudden asperity, "considerin' the things they sometimes have to look down on!"

"I'd *love*," aspired the romantic boy, "to go up—an' up—an' up, just like that, an' then bust — bust in red an' yellow blazes."

"You will, one o' these days; that is, if you behave yourself. We have that assurance within us."

"I wouldn' mind the dyin' out," ingeminated Palmerston, "so's I could have one jolly good bust."

"In the land of marrow an' fatness we shall be doing of it permanent," Mrs Bowldler assured him for his comfort. "That's to say, if we ever get there. But you just wait till they let off the set pieces. There's one of Queen Victoria, you can see the very eyelids. Sixty years Queen of England, come next June: with *God Bless Her* underneath in squibs like Belshazzar's Feast. And He *will*, too, from what I'm given to understand."

As it turned out, at the distance from which our company viewed them, these set pieces laid some tax on the imagination. They were duly applauded, to be sure; and when Mrs Bosenna exclaimed "How lovely!" and 'Bias allowed "Not so bad," their tribute scarcely differed, albeit paid in different coin. The rockets, however, won the highest commendation, and a blaze of coloured fires on the surrounding hills ran the rockets a close second.

Towards the close of the display a few drops of rain began to fall from the overcharged clouds: large premonitory drops, protesting against this disturbance of the upper air.

"That's the fine-alley!" announced 'Bias, as another detonator banged aloft, while a volcano of "fiery serpents" hissed and screamed behind it. "Let's run for shelter!"

He offered his arm. Cai did the same. But Mrs Bosenna — she had not clung to any one this time—very nimbly slipped between them and took Dinah for protector. She was in the gayest of moods, as they all scrambled up the wet steps to the roadway, and so down other flights of wet steps under the pattering rain to the shelter of 'Bias's summer-house.

"Just in time!" she panted, shaking the wet drops from her cloak. "And I can't remember whenever I've enjoyed myself so much. But—" as she looked about her and over the table—"what a feast!"

It was a noble feast. If Cai had been busy all day, no less had 'Bias been busy. There were lobsters; there were chickens, with a boiled ham; there was a cold sirloin of beef, for grosser tastes: there were jellies, tartlets, a trifle, a cherry pie. There was beer in a nine-gallon jar, and cider in another. There were bottles of fizzy lemonade, with a dash of which Mrs Bosenna insisted on diluting her cider. Her mirth was infectious as they feasted, while the rain, now descending in a torrent, drummed on the summer-house roof.

"How on earth we're ever to get home, Dinah, I'm sure I don't know! And what's more, I don't seem to care, just yet."

Captain Cai and Captain 'Bias protested in unison that, when the time came, they would escort her home against all perils.

"You can trust me, ma'am, I hope?" blurted 'Bias.

"I can trust both of you, I hope." Mrs Bosenna glanced towards Cai, or so Cai thought.

"The jokes they keep makin'!" Palmerston reported to Mrs Bowldler. (With the utmost cheerfulness he continued running to and fro between summer-house and residence under the downpour.) "When Mrs Bosenna said that about a merrythought I almost split myself."

"There's a medium in all things," Mrs Bowldler advised him. "Stand-offish should be your expression when waiting at table; like as if you'd heard it all before several times, no matter how funny they talk. As for splitting, I shiver at the bare thought."

"Well, I didn't do it, really. I just got my hand over my mouth in time."

"And what did that other woman happen to be doing?" asked Mrs Bowldler.

"I partic'l'ly noticed," said Palmerston. "She was sittin' quiet and playin' with her 'am."

The rain continuing, 'Bias at the close of supper sensationally produced two packs of cards and proposed that, as soon as Palmerston had removed the cloth, they should play what he called "a rubber to whist." He and Mrs Bosenna cut together; Cai with Dinah. Now, the two captains could, as a rule, play a good hand at whist. On this occasion they played so abominably as to surprise themselves and each other. Dinah did not profess to be an expert, and Cai's blunders were mostly lost on her. But 'Bias disgraced himself before his partner, who neither reproached him nor once missed a trick.

"I can't tell what's come over me to-night," he confessed at the end of the second rubber.

"Regatta-day!" laughed Mrs Bosenna, and pushed the cards away. The wedding-ring on her third finger glanced under the light of the hanging lamp. "Dinah shall tell our fortunes," she suggested.

Dinah took the pack and proceeded very gravely to tell their fortunes. She began with Captain Hunken, and found that, a dark lady happening in the "second house," he would certainly marry one of that hue, with plenty of money, and live happy ever after.

She next attempted Captain Hocken's. "Well, that's funny, now!" she exclaimed, after dealing out the cards face uppermost.

"What's funny?" asked Cai.

"Why," said Dinah, after a long scrutiny, during which she pursed and unpursed her lips half a dozen times at least, "the cards are different, o' course, but they say the same thing—dark lady and all—and I can't make it other."

"No need," said Cai cheerfully, drawing at his pipe (for Mrs Bosenna had given the pair permission to smoke). "So long as you let 'Bias an' me run on the same lines, I'm satisfied. Eh, 'Bias?"

"But 'tis the *same* lady!"

"Oh! That would alter matters, nat'ch'rally."

Dinah swept the cards together again and shuffled them. "Shall I tell *your* fortune, mistress?" she asked mischievously.

"No," said Mrs Bosenna, rising. "The rain has stopped, and it's time we were getting home, between the showers."

Again Captain Cai and Captain 'Bias offered gallantly to accompany her to the gate of Rilla Farm; but she would have none of their escort.

"No one is going to insult me on the road," she assured them. "And besides, if they did, Dinah would do the screaming. That's why I brought her."

She had enjoyed her evening amazingly. She took her departure with a few happily chosen words which left no doubt of it.

After divesting himself of his coat that night, Captain Cai laid a hand on his upper arm and felt it timidly. Unless he mistook, the flesh beneath the shirt-sleeve yet kept some faint vibration of Mrs Bosenna's hand, resting upon it, thrilling it.

"The point is," said Cai to himself, "it can't be 'Bias, anyway. I felt pretty sure at the time that Philp was lyin'. But what a brazen fellow it is!"

Strangely enough, in his bedroom on the other side of the party wall Captain 'Bias stood at that moment deep in meditation. He, too, was rubbing his arm, just below the biceps.

Yet the explanation is simple. You have only to bethink you that Mrs Bosenna, like any other woman, *had two hands.*

(To be continued.)

TALES OF THE MERMAID TAVERN.

BY ALFRED NOYES.

VI. THE BURIAL OF A QUEEN.

PART I.

'Twas on an All Souls' Eve that our good Inn
—Whereof, for ten years now, myself was host—
Heard and took part in its most eerie tale.
It was a bitter night; and master Ben,
—His hair now flecked with grey, though youth still fired
His deep and ageless eyes,—in the old oak-chair,
Over the roaring hearth, puffed at his pipe;
A little sad, as often I found him now
Remembering vanished faces. Yet the years
Brought others round him. Wreaths of Heliochrise
Gleamed still in that great tribe of Benjamin,
Burned still across the malmsey and muscadel.
Chapman and Browne, Herrick,—a name like thyme
Crushed into sweetness by a bare-foot maid
Milking, at dewy dawn, in Elfin-land,—
These three came late, and sat in a little room
Aside, supping together, on one great pie,
Whereof both crust and coffin were prepared
By master Herrick's receipt, and all washed down
With mighty cups of sack. This left with Ben,
John Ford, wrapped in his cloak, brooding aloof,
Drayton and Lodge and Drummond of Hawthornden.
Suddenly, in the porch, I heard a sound
Of iron that grated on the flags. A spade
And pick came edging through the door.
"O, room!
Room for the master-craftsman," muttered Ford,
And grey old sexton Scarlet hobbled in.
He shuffled off the snow that clogged his boots,
—On my clean rushes!—brushed it from his cloak
Of Northern Russet, wiped his rheumatic knees,
Blew out his lanthorn, hung it on a nail,
Leaned his rude pick and spade against the wall,
Flung back his rough frieze hood, flapped his gaunt arms,
And called for ale.
"Come to the fire," said Lodge.
"Room for the wisest counsellor of kings,
The kindly sage that puts us all to bed,
And tucks us up beneath the grass-green quilt."

"Plenty of work, eh Timothy?" said Ben.
"Work? Where's my liquor? O, ay, there's work to spare,"
Old Scarlet croaked, then quaffed his creaming stoup,
While Ben said softly—"Pity you could not spare,
You and your Scythe-man, some of the golden lads
That I have seen here in the Mermaid Inn!"
Then, with a quiet smile he shook his head
And turned to master Drummond of Hawthornden.
"New wine, new songs, and all as fresh as may!
And I—begin to think
The old were better. Proof—I am growing old.
Well, I can weave the old threnodies anew."
And, filling his cup, he murmured, soft and low,
—Yet with some passion where the central wave
Of tender repetition swelled to a height
Of sadness, then in melody died away—
A new song, breaking on an ancient shore:—

"Marlowe is dead, and Greene is in his grave,
And sweet Will Shakespeare long ago is gone!
Our Ocean-shepherd sleeps beneath the wave;
Robin is dead, and Marlowe in his grave.
Why should I stay to chant an idle stave,
And in my Mermaid Tavern drink alone?
For Kit is dead, and Greene is in his grave,
And sweet Will Shakespeare long ago is gone.

Where is the singer of the Faerie Queen?
Where are the lyric lips of Astrophel?
Long, long ago, their quiet graves were green;
Ay, and the grave, too, of their Faerie Queen!
And yet their faces, hovering here unseen,
Call me to taste their new-found œnomel;
To sup with him who sang the Faerie Queen;
To drink with him whose name was Astrophel.

I drink to that great Inn beyond the grave!
—If there be none, the gods have done us wrong.—
Ere long I hope to chant a better stave
In some great Mermaid Inn beyond the grave;
And quaff the best of earth that heaven can save,—
Red wine like blood, deep love of friends, and song.
I drink to that great Inn beyond the grave;
And hope to greet my golden lads ere long."

He raised his cup and drank in silence. Lodge
Drank with him, too, and Drummond of Hawthornden.
And then—a strange thing happened.
I saw John Ford,
"With folded arms and melancholy hat"
(As in our Mermaid jest he still would sit)
Watching old Scarlet like a man in trance.
The sexton gulped his ale and smacked his lips,

Then croaked again—"O, ay, there's work to spare,
We fills 'em faster than the spades can dig."
And, all at once, the lights burned low and blue.
Ford leaned right forward, with his grim black eyes
Widening.
"Why, that's a marvellous ring!" he said,
And pointed to the sexton's gnarled old hand
Spread on that black oak-table like the claw
Of some great bird of prey. "A ruby worth
The ransom of a queen!" The fire leapt up!
The sexton stared at him;
Then stretched his hand out, with its blue-black nails,
Full in the light, a grim earth-coloured hand,
But bare as it was born.
"There was a ring!
I could have sworn it! Red as blood!" cried Ford.
And Ben and Lodge and Drummond of Hawthornden
All stared at him. For such a silent soul
Was master Ford that, when he suddenly spake,
It struck the rest as dumb as if the Sphinx
Had opened its cold stone lips. He would sit mute
Brooding, aloof, for hours, his cloak around him,
A staff between his knees, as if prepared
For a long journey, a lonely pilgrimage
To some dark tomb; a strange and sorrowful soul,
Yet not—as many thought him—harsh or hard,
But of a most kind patience. Though he wrote
In blood, they say, the blood came from his heart;
And all the sufferings of this world he took
To his own soul, and bade them pasture there;
Till out of his compassion, he became
A monument of bitterness. He rebelled;
And so fell short of that celestial height
Whereto the greatest only climb, who stand
By Shakespeare, and accept the Eternal Law.
These find, in law, firm footing for the soul,
The strength that binds the stars, and reins the sea,
The base of being, the pillars of the world,
The pledge of honour, the pure cord of love,
The form of truth, the golden floors of heaven.
These men discern a height beyond all heights,
A depth below all depths, and never an end
Without a pang beyond it, and a hope;
Without a heaven beyond it, and a hell.
For these, despair is like a bubble pricked,
An old romance to make young lovers weep.
For these, the law becomes a fiery road,
A Jacob's ladder through that vast abyss,

Lacking no rung from realm to loftier realm,
Nor wanting one degree from dust to wings.
Ay, at the last, radiant with victory,
They lay strong hands upon the wingéd steeds
And fiery chariots, and exult to hold,
Themselves, the throbbing reins, whereby they steer
The stormy splendours.
He, being less, rebelled,
Cried out for unreined steeds, and unruled stars,
An unprohibited ocean and a truth
Untrue; and the equal thunder of the law
Hurled him to night and chaos, who was born
To shine upon the forehead of the day.
And yet—the voice of darkness and despair
May speak for heaven where heaven would not be heard,
May fight for heaven where heaven would not prevail,
And the consummate splendour of that strife,
Swallowing up all discords, all defeat,
In one huge victory, harmonising all,
Make Lucifer, at last, at one with God.

There,—on that All Souls' Eve, you might have thought
A dead man spoke, to see how Drayton stared,
And Drummond started.
"You saw no ruby ring,"
The old sexton muttered sullenly. "If you did,
The worse for me, by all accounts. The lights
Burned low. You caught the fire-light on my fist.
What was it like, this ring?"
"A band of gold,
And a great ruby, heart-shaped, fit to burn
Between the breasts of Laïs. Am I awake
Or dreaming?"
"Well,—that makes the second time!
There's many have said they saw it, out of jest,
To scare me. For the astrologer did say
The third time I should die. Now, did you see it?
Most likely someone's told you that old tale!
You hadn't heard it, now?"
Ford shook his head.
"What tale?" said Ben.
"O, you could make a book
About my life. I've talked with quick and dead,
And neither ghost nor flesh can fright me now!
I wish it was a ring, so 's I could catch him,
And sell him; but I've never seen him yet.
A white witch told me, if I did, I'd go
Clink, just like that, to heaven or t'other place,

Whirled in a fiery chariot with ten steeds
The way Elijah went. For I have seen
So many mighty things that I must die
Mightily.
Well,—I came, sirs, to my craft
The day mine uncle Robert dug the grave
For good Queen Katharine, she whose heart was broke
By old King Harry, a very great while ago.
Maybe you've heard about my uncle, sirs?
He was far-famous for his grave-digging.
In depth, in speed, in neatness, he'd no match!
They've put a fine slab to his memory
In Peterborough Cathedral—*Robert Scarlet,*
Sexton for half a century, it says,
In Peterborough Cathedral, where he built
The last sad habitation for two queens,
And many hundreds of the common sort.
And now himself, who for so many built
Domus Æternales, others have buried.
Obiit anno ætatis, ninety-eight,
July the second, fifteen ninety-four.
"We should do well, sir, with a slab like that,
Shouldn't we?" And the sexton leered at Lodge.
"Not many boasts a finer slab than that,
There's many a king done worse. Ah, well, you see,
He'd a fine record. Living to ninety-eight,
He buried generations of the poor,
A countless host, and thought no more of it
Than digging potatoes. He'd a lofty mind
That found no satisfaction in small deeds.
But from his burying of two queens he drew
A lively pleasure. Could he have buried a third,
It would indeed have crowned his old white hairs.
But he was famous, and he thought, perchance,
A third were mere vain-glory. So he died.
I helped him with the second."
The old man leered
To see the shaft go home.
Ben filled the stoup
With ale. "So that," quoth he, "began the tale
About this ruby ring?" "But who," said Lodge,
"Who was the second queen?"
"A famous queen,
And a great lover! When you hear her name,
Your hearts will leap. Her beauty passed the bounds
Of modesty, men say, yet—she died young!
We buried her at midnight. There were few
That knew it; for the high State Funeral

Was held upon the morrow, Lammas morn.
Anon you shall hear why. A strange thing that,—
To see the mourners weeping round a hearse
That held a dummy coffin. Stranger still
To see us lowering the true coffin down
By torchlight, with some few of her true friends,
In Peterborough Cathedral, all alone."
"Old as the world," said Ford. "It is the way
Of princes. Their true tears and smiles are seen
At dead of night, like ghosts raised from the grave!
And all the luxury of their brief, bright noon,
Cloaks but a dummy throne, a mask of life;
And, at the last, drapes a false catafalque,
Holding a vacant urn, a mask of death.
But tell, tell on!"
The sexton took a draught
Of ale and smacked his lips.
"Mine uncle lived
A mile or more from Peterborough then.
And, past his cottage, in the dead of night,
Her royal coach came creeping through the lanes,
With scutcheons round it and no crowd to see,
And heralds carrying torches in their hands,
And none to admire, but him and me, and one,
A pedlar-poet, who lodged with us that week
And paid his lodging with a bunch of rhymes.
By these, he said, my uncle Robert's fame
Should live, as in a picture, till the crack
Of doom. My uncle thought that he should pay
Four pence beside; but, when the man declared
The thought unworthy of these august events,
My uncle was abashed.
And, truth to tell,
The rhymes were mellow, though here and there he swerved
From truth to make them so. Nor would he change
'June' to 'July' for all that we could say.
'I never said the month was June,' he cried,
'And if I did, Shakespeare hath jumped an age!
Gods, will you hedge me round with thirty nights?
"June" rhymes with "moon"!' With that, he flung them down
And strode away like Lucifer, and was gone,
Before old Scarlet could approach again
The matter of that four-pence.
Yet his rhymes
Have caught the very colours of that night!
I can see through them,
Ay, just as through our cottage window-panes,

Can see the great black coach,
Carrying the dead queen past our garden-gate.
The roses bobbing and fluttering to and fro,
Hide, and yet show the more by hiding, half.
And, like smoked glass through which you see the sun,
The song shows truest when it blurs the truth.
This is the way it goes."

He rose to his feet,
Picked up his spade, and struck an attitude,
Leaning upon it. "I've got to feel my spade,
Or I'll forget it. This is the way I speak it.
Always." And, with a schoolboy's rigid face,
And eyes fixed on the rafters, he began,
Sing-song, the pedlar-poet's bunch of rhymes :—

As I went by the cattle-shed
  The grey dew dimmed the grass,
And, under a twisted apple-tree,
Old Robin Scarlet stood by me.
"Keep watch! Keep watch to-night," he said,
  "There's things 'ull come to pass.

"Keep watch until the moon has cleared
  The thatch of yonder rick;
Then I'll come out of my cottage-door
To wait for the coach of a queen once more;
And—you'll say nothing of what you've heard,
  But rise and follow me quick."

"And what 'ull I see if I keep your trust,
  And wait and watch so late?"
"Pride," he said, "and Pomp," he said,
"Beauty to haunt you till you're dead,
And Glorious Dust that goes to dust,
  Passing the white farm-gate.

"You are young and all for adventure, lad,
  And the great tales to be told:
This night, before the clock strike one,
Your lordliest hour will all be done;
But you'll remember it and be glad,
  In the days when you are old!"

All in the middle of the night,
  My face was at the pane;
When, creeping out of his cottage-door,
To wait for the coach of a queen once more,
Old Scarlet, in the moon-light,
  Beckoned to me again.

He stood beneath a lilac-spray,
  Like Father Time for dole,
In Reading Tawny cloak and hood,
With mattock and with spade he stood,
And, far away to southward,
  A bell began to toll.

He stood beneath a lilac-spray,
And never a word he said;
But, as I stole out of the house,
He pointed over the orchard boughs,
Where, not with dawn or sunset,
The Northern sky grew red.

I followed him, and half in fear,
To the old farm-gate again;
And, round the curve of the long white road,
I saw that the dew-dashed hedges glowed
Red with the grandeur drawing near,
And the torches of her train.

They carried her down with singing,
With singing sweet and low,
Slowly round the curve they came,
Twenty torches dropping flame,
The heralds that were bringing her
The way we all must go.

'Twas master William Dethick,
The Garter King of Arms,
Before her royal coach did ride,
With none to see his Coat of Pride,
For peace was on the country-side,
And sleep upon the farms;

Peace upon the red farm,
Peace upon the grey,
Peace on the heavy orchard trees,
And little white-walled cottages,
Peace upon the wayside,
And sleep upon the way.

So master William Dethick,
With forty horse and men,
Like any common man and mean
Rode on before the Queen, the Queen,
And—only a wandering pedlar
Could tell the tale again.

How, like a cloud of darkness,
Between the torches moved
Four black steeds and a velvet pall
Crowned with the Crown Imperiall
And—on her shield—the lilies,
The lilies that she loved.

Ah, stained and ever stainless,
Ah, white as her own hand,
White as the wonder of that brow,
Crowned with colder lilies now,
White on the velvet darkness,
The lilies of her land!

The witch from over the water,
The fay from over the foam,
The bride that rode thro' Edinbro' town
With satin shoes and a silken gown,
A queen, and a great king's daughter,—
Thus they carried her home,

With torches and with scutcheons,
Unhonoured and unseen,
With the lilies of France in the wind a-stir,
And the Lion of Scotland over her,
Darkly, in the dead of night,
They carried the Queen, the Queen!

The sexton paused and took a draught of ale.
"'Twas there," he said, "I joined 'em at the gate,
My uncle and the pedlar. What they sang,
The little shadowy throng of men that walked
Behind the scutcheoned coach with bare bent heads
I know not; but 'twas very soft and low.
They walked behind the rest, like shadows flung
Behind the torch-light, from that strange dark hearse.
And, some said, afterwards, they were the ghosts
Of lovers that this queen had brought to death.
A foolish thought it seemed to me, and yet
Like the night-wind they sang. And there was one
An olive-coloured man,—the pedlar said
Was like a certain foreigner that she loved,
One Chastelard, a wild French poet of hers.
Also the pedlar thought they sang 'farewell'
In words like this, and that the words in French
Were written by the hapless Queen herself,
When as a girl she left the vines of France
For Scotland and the halls of Holyrood:—

I.

Though thy hands have plied their trade
Eighty years without a rest,
Robin Scarlet, never thy spade
Built a house for such a guest!
Carry her where, in earliest June,
All the whitest hawthorns blow;
Carry her under the midnight moon,
Singing very soft and low.
Slow between the low green larches, carry the lovely lady sleeping,
Past the low white moon-lit farms, along the lilac-shadowed way!
Carry her through the summer darkness, weeping, weeping, weeping, weeping!
Answering only, to any that ask you, whence ye carry her,—
Fotheringhay!

II.

She was gayer than a child!
—Let your torches droop for sorrow.—
Laughter in her eyes ran wild!
—Carry her down to Peterboro'.—
Words were kisses in her mouth!
—Let no word of blame be spoken.—
She was Queen of all the South!
—In the North, her heart was broken.—
They should have left her in her vineyards, left her heart to her land's own keeping,
Left her white breast room to breathe, and left her light foot free to dance.
Out of the cold grey Northern mists, we carry her weeping, weeping, weeping,—
O, ma patrie,
La plus chérie,
Adieu, plaisant pays de France!

III.

Many a red heart died to beat
—Music swelled in Holyrood!—
Once, beneath her fair white feet.
—Now the floors may rot with blood—
She was young and her deep hair—
—Wind and rain were all her fate!—
Trapped young Love as in a snare.
—And the wind's a sword in the Canongate!
Edinboro'!
Edinboro'!
Music built the towers of Troy, but thy gray walls are built of sorrow!
Wind-swept hills, and sorrowful glens, of thrifty sowing and iron reaping,
What if her foot were fair as a sunbeam, how should it touch or melt your snows?
What if her hair were a silken mesh?
Hands of steel can deal hard blows,
Iron breast-plates bruise fair flesh!
Carry her southward, palled in purple,
Weeping, weeping, weeping, weeping,
What had their rocks to do with roses? Body and soul she was all one rose?

Thus, through the summer night, slowly they went,
We three behind,—the pedlar-poet and I,
And Robin Scarlet. The moving flare that ringed
The escutcheoned hearse, lit every leaf distinct
Along the hedges and woke the sleeping birds,
But drew no watchers from the drowsier farms.
Thus, through a world of innocence and sleep,
We brought her to the doors of her last home,
In Peterborough Cathedral. Round her tomb
They stood, in the huge gloom of those old aisles,

The heralds with their torches, but their light
Struggled in vain with that tremendous dark.
Their ring of smoky red could only show
A few sad faces round the purple pall,
The wings of a stone angel overhead,
The base of three great pillars, and, fitfully,
Faint as the phosphorus glowing in some old vault,
One little slab of marble, far away.
Yet, or the darkness, or the pedlar's words
Had made me fanciful, I thought I saw
Bowed shadows praying in those unplumbed aisles,
Nay, dimly heard them weeping, in a grief
That still was built of silence, like the drip
Of water from a frozen fountain-head.
We laid her in her grave. We closed the tomb.
With echoing footsteps all the funeral went;
And I went last to close and lock the doors;
Last, and half frightened of the enormous gloom
That rolled along behind me as one by one
The torches vanished. O, I was glad to see
The moon-light on the kind turf-mounds again.
But, as I turned the key, a quivering hand
Was laid upon my arm. I turned and saw
That foreigner with the olive-coloured face.
From head to foot he shivered, as with cold.
He drew me into the shadow of the porch.
'Come back with me,' he whispered, and slid his hand
—Like ice it was!—along my wrist, and slipped
A ring upon my finger, muttering quick,
As in a burning fever, 'All the wealth
Of Eldorado for one hour! Come back!
I must go back and see her face again!
I was not there, not there, the day she—died.
You'll help me with the coffin. Not a soul
Will know. Come back! One moment, only one!'
I thought the man was mad, and plucked my hand
Away from him. He caught me by the sleeve,
And sank upon his knees, lifting his face
Most piteously to mine. 'One moment! See!
I loved her!'
I saw the moonlight glisten on his tears,
Great, long, slow tears they were; and then—my God—
As his face lifted and his head sank back
Beseeching me—I saw a crimson thread
Circling his throat, as though the headsman's axe
Had cloven it with one blow, so shrewd, so keen,
The head had slipped not from the trunk.
I gasped;

And, as he pleaded, stretching his head back,
The wound, O like a second awful mouth,
The wound began to gape.
I tore my cloak
Out of his clutch. My keys fell with a clash.
I left them where they lay, and with a shout
I dashed into the broad white empty road.
There was no soul in sight. Sweating with fear
I hastened home, not daring to look back;
But as I turned the corner, I heard the clang
Of those great doors, and knew he had entered in.

Not till I saw before me in the lane
The pedlar and my uncle did I halt
And look at that which clasped my finger still
As with a band of ice.
My hand was bare!
I stared at it and rubbed it. Then I thought
I had been dreaming. There had been no ring!
The poor man I had left there in the porch,
Being a Frenchman, talked a little wild;
But only wished to look upon her grave.
And I—I was the madman! So I said
Nothing. But all the same, for all my thoughts,
I'd not go back that night to find the keys,
No, not for all the rubies in the crown
Of Prester John."

(*To be continued.*)

SNATTY.

BY JEFFERY E. JEFFERY.

" This 'appened in a battle to a batt'ry of the corps
Which is first among the women an' amazin' first in war."
—KIPLING.

I.

DRIVER JOSEPH SNATT, K3 Battery, R.H.A., slouched across the barrack-square on his way to the stables. Having just received a severe punishment for the heinous crime of ill-treating a horse, in spite of his plausible excuse that he had been bitten and had lost his temper, Snatty, as he was always called, felt much aggrieved.

"'Orses," he thought to himself, "is everything in this 'ere bloomin' batt'ry — men's nothing."

Nor, in his own particular case, was he far wrong. For the horses of K3 were certainly quite wonderful, and Snatty was undoubtedly a "waster." His death or his desertion would have been a small matter compared with the spoiling of one equine temper.

The officers disliked him because he was an eyesore to them; the N.C.O.'s hated him because he gave them endless trouble; and the men had shown their distrust of his personal cleanliness by ducking him in a horse-trough more than once. Driver Snatt felt that every man's hand was against him, and since he possessed neither the will power nor the desire to overcome his delinquencies by a little honest toil, he not infrequently drowned his sorrows in large potations of canteen beer. In person he was small and rather shrivelled looking—old for his age unquestionably. A nervous manner and a slight stammer in the presence of his superiors, combined with a shifty eye at all times, served to enhance the unpleasing effect which he produced on all who knew him. There was but one thing to be said for him—he could ride. Before enlisting he had been in a training stable, but had been dismissed for drink or worse. On foot he lounged about with rounded shoulders and uneven steps, always untidy and often dirty. But once upon a horse, the puny, awkward figure that was the despair of N.C.O.'s and officers alike, became graceful, supple, almost beautiful. The firm, easy seat that swayed to every motion, the hands that coaxed even the hard-mouthed gun-horses into going kindly, betrayed the horseman born. Snatty might kick his horses in the stomach; he would never jerk them in the mouth.

At the conclusion of the midday stable-hour Snatt was

summoned before his section officer, one Briddlington by name, more frequently known as "Biddie," and thus addressed—

"Now, look here: you've made a dam' poor show so far, and this is your last chance. If you don't take it, God help you, for I won't. See?"

Snatt stared at his boot, swallowed twice, and then fixed his gaze on some distant point above the opposite stable.

"Ye-es, sir," he said huskily.

"Very well. Now you've never had a job of your own, and I'm going to try you with one. You'll take over the wheel of A sub-section gun team to-day, and have those two remounts to drive. I shall give you a fortnight's trial. If I see you're trying, I'll do all I can for you. Otherwise—out you go. Understand that?"

Again the deep interest in the distant point, but this time there was a trace of surprise in the faintly uttered "Yes, sir."

Snatty saluted and retired, wondering greatly. The wheel-driver of a gun team is an important personage: he occupies a coveted position attained only by those who combine skill, nerve, and horsemanship with the ability to tend a pair of horses as they would their own children, and to clean a double set of harness better than their fellows. Snatty at first was resentful: "'E's put me there to make a fool of me, I s'pose. All right, I'll show 'im up. I can drive as well as any of them." Then he experienced a feeling of pleasurable anticipation. As it so happened he detested the driver whose place he was to take, and he looked forward with satisfaction to witnessing the fury of that worthy when ordered to "hand over" to the despised waster of the battery. He was not grateful—that was not his nature—nor was he proud of having been selected. He was on the defensive, determined to show that, given a definite position with duties and responsibilities of his own, he could do very well—if he chose. Which was precisely the frame of mind into which his thoughtful subaltern had hoped to lure him.

In the barrack-room Snatty met with much abuse. In a battery which prides itself enormously on its horses, any ill-treatment of them is not left unnoticed. Barrack-room invective does not take the form of delicate sarcasm: on the contrary, it is coarse and directly to the point. The culprit sat upon his bed-cot and sulked in silence, until a carroty-headed driver sitting on the table with his hat on the back of his head remarked—

"I see ole Biddie givin' you a proper chokin' off after stables."

The chance for which Snatty had waited very patiently had come, and he retorted quickly—

"Oh! did yer? Well, p'raps you'll be glad to 'ear that 'e 'as given me your 'orses and the wheel of A sub., says you're no —— use, 'e does!"

Howls of derision greeted this sally, and Snatty relapsed

into silence. But that evening he whistled softly to himself as he led his new horses out to water and watched his red-headed enemy, deprived of his legitimate occupation, put to the unpleasant task of "mucking out" the stable. The day, so Snatty felt, had not been wasted.

II.

From that time dated the conversion of Driver Joseph Snatt. The change was necessarily gradual, for no man can reform in a week: the habits inculcated by years of idleness cannot be cast aside in a moment, nor can the doubts and suspicions clinging to an untrustworthy character be dispersed by one day's genuine work. But still a change for the better was evident. The comments of the barrack-room were free but not unfriendly, for Snatty was beginning to find his true level after his own peculiar fashion. Briddlington, too, did not fail to notice the success of his experiment. Whilst inclined to boast of it in a laughing way to his brother officers, he had the good sense to overlook many trivial offences and to make much of anything that he could find to praise. What pleased him most of all was Snatty's behaviour to his horses. Dirty he still was upon occasions, and scarcely as smart as most drivers of the battery; nor was he always quite devoid of drink, but to his horses from that first day onwards he became a devoted, faithful slave. They were a pair of which any man might well have been proud. Both were bright bays, well matched in colour and in size. In shape they were almost the ideal stamp of artillery wheeler, which is tantamount to saying that they might have graced the stud of any hunting gentleman of fifteen stone or thereabouts. Snatty's pride in them was almost ludicrous. A word said against them would put him up in arms at once, and when Territorials borrowed the battery horses for their training on Saturday afternoons his indignation knew no bounds.

"'Ow can I keep me 'orses fit," he used to say, "if a bloomin' bank clerk goes drivin' 'em at a stretched gallop the 'ole o' Saturday? Proper dis'eartenin', that's wot it is." And this in spite of the fact that he was allowed a shilling for his trouble. The villainies that he perpetrated for their wellbeing, if discovered, would have given him small chance before a stern commanding officer. He stole oats from the forage barn, bread and sugar from his barrack-room, and even the feeds from the next manger. Snatty's moral sense, as we have seen, was not a very high one. But pricked ears and gentle whinnies as he approached, and velvety muzzles pushed into his roughened hand, betrayed the effect of

many a purloined dainty, and amply compensated for any qualms which a guilty but belated conscience may have given him. Not that he was particularly caressing in his manner. He would growl at each one as he groomed him, or scold him as one does a naughty child, and his "Naow *then*, stand still will yer, Dawn," was well known during stable hour. Who it was who had first called the off horse Dawn was never quite clear, but Snatty in a fit of poetic inspiration had christened the other Daylight. Dawn was difficult to shoe, so difficult indeed that his driver's presence was required in the forge to keep him still. And when Snatty went on furlough for a month both horses began to lose condition.

The years went by and Snatty soldiered on, winter and summer, drill season and leave season, content to drive the wheel of A and drink a bit too much on Saturdays. But in that time he had become a man—not a strong, determined man, certainly not a refined one, but for all that a man. To Briddlington, who had raised him from the mental slough in which he had lain to all appearances content, he at no time betrayed a sense of gratitude. On the contrary, the position of a privileged person of some standing which he had gained he attributed largely to his own cunning in deceiving his superiors combined with his consummate skill with horses. But still he had learnt his job, and was fulfilling his destiny to more purpose than many better men. Moreover he was happy. Crooning softly as he polished straps and buckles in the harness-room, with a skill and speed born of long practice, he was contented, and was vaguely conscious that the world was not a bad place after all. An officer who knew him well once said—

"I wouldn't trust him to carry a bottle of whisky half a mile, but I'd send him across England with a pair of horses—by himself. And as to driving—well, I don't know about the needle and the camel's eye, but I know that Snatty would drive blind drunk along the narrow road to Heaven and never let his axles touch!" For two years in succession the battery won the galloping competition at Olympia, with Snatty in the wheel. And over rough ground, moving fast, he was unequalled.

When his time was up and Snatty had to go, there was never, perhaps, a time-expired man who was so hard put to it to assume a joy at leaving which he did not feel. Of course, like other men, he swaggered about saying that he was glad to be "shut of" the army; that he had got a nice little place to step into where there wasn't any "Do this" and "Do that" and "Why the deuce haven't you done what I told you?" But in his heart he was more affected than he had ever been before.

"Wot about yer 'orses, Snatty?" some one asked

him; "who's going to 'ave them when you're gorn?"

"'Ow should I know?" he answered, rather nettled.

"Nobbler Parsons, so I 'eard. 'E'll soon spoil 'em, I bet yer."

Then was Snatty very wroth, and he replied—

"You leave me and my 'orses alone, or you'll be in for it, I warn yer," thereby revealing his inmost feelings most effectually.

On the eve of his departure he was treated by his friends till he grew almost maudlin. Then he slipped away "just to say good-bye to 'em," and even that hardened assembly of "canteen regulars" forbore to scoff. He was found when the battery came down to evening stables, a pathetic figure, in his ill-fitting suit of plain clothes, standing between his beloved pair, an arm round the neck of one, his pockets full of sugar, and tears of drink and genuine grief trickling down his unwashed cheeks.

"Six bloomin' years I've 'ad yer," they heard him say. "Six bloomin' years, and no one's ever said a word against yer that I 'aven't knocked the 'ead off. P'rades and manœuvres, practice camp and ceremonial, there's nothin' I can't do wiv yer and . . . and, Gawd, I wish I wasn't leavin' yer now to some other bloke." Then they led him gently away, and on the morrow he was gone. For a week he was missed; in a month he was forgotten. Only Daylight and Dawn still fretted for him, and turned round in their stalls with anxious, wistful eyes.

For six months Snatty struggled to keep body and soul together, living upon his reserve pay and upon such small sums as he could pick up by doing odd jobs in livery stables. But the self-respect which he had won so hardly slipped away from him, and he sank slowly in the social scale. The lot of the ex-soldier whose character is "fair," and whose record of sobriety leaves much to be desired, is not a happy one. Snatty was in rags and wellnigh starving. Small wonder, then, that one day the blandishments of an eloquent recruiting sergeant proved too much for his resistance, and that he succumbed to the temptations thrust upon him by the great god Hunger. Manfully he perjured himself when brought before the magistrate. His name was Henry Morgan, his age twenty-three years and five months, and he had never served before, so help him God. All false—but Snatty wished to live.

He asked to be put into the infantry, fearing that his knowledge of the ways of troop stables would betray him if he joined a mounted branch. The penalties attached to a "false answer on attestation" were heavy, as he knew, and he would take no chances. In due course, therefore, he found himself posted to a crack light infantry regiment, and his troubles soon began. To be marched about a barrack-square followed by shouts of objurgation was bad enough:

to be pestered with the intricacies of musketry was worse: but what galled him most of all was to have to walk. He loathed the life. This was not the world of soldiering that he had known and loved. His soul hungered for the rattle of log-chains and the jingle of harness; the smell of the stable still lingered in his nostrils. Moreover, he was in constant trouble, for desperation made him reckless. Those who had known him in the battery would scarcely have recognised in the sullen ne'er-do-well whom men called Morgan, the cheerful Snatty of a former time. He had just passed his recruit drills (with difficulty be it said) and taken his place in the ranks, when the war which wise men had predicted as inevitable was forced upon the nation with disconcerting suddenness. The regiment was ordered out on service, and with it, amongst nine hundred other souls, went Private Henry Morgan, *alias* Snatty.

III.

A hot sun beating down from a cloudless sky upon a land parched and dusty from a lengthened drought; miles upon miles of rolling downs, which once were green but which the driest summer for many years has baked into a dirty yellow; here and there an oasis consisting of a copse of fir-trees, a farmstead, and a field or two of pasture marking the presence of a kindly stream: a landscape in short so typical of hundreds of square miles of this particular region that ordinarily it would fail to interest. But to-day the peace of the country side is disturbed by the boom of guns and the rattle of musketry. Two mighty armies are at grips at last, and in the space between them hovers Death.

Upon a little rise commanding a good view of the surrounding country there is a long line of khaki figures lying prone behind a scanty earthwork. These are infantry, and shaken infantry at that; shaken because they have marched all night and stormed that hill at dawn with fearful loss, because they are weak from hunger and parched with thirst, and because they feel in their hearts that the end is near. Relief must come, or one determined rush will drive them back to ruin. Shells burst over them with whip-like crack, rifle fire tears through their ranks, and sometimes a harsh scream followed by a deafening report and clouds of acrid smoke marks the advent of a high-explosive shell.

A much harassed brigadier sat behind a rock near the telephone awaiting the answer to his urgent demand for guns. It came sooner than he expected it, and took the tangible shape of a little group of horsemen which appeared on the hill some way to his right. There was a quick consultation as

glasses swept the front. Then the horses were led away under cover and the range-takers began operations. The brigadier recognised the signs and gained fresh hope as he saw that his prayer was answered. At the far end of the line Private Morgan, busily engaged in excavating a hole for himself by means of an entrenching tool much resembling a short-handled garden hoe, looked up quickly as he heard a well-known voice say—

"All right, Biddie, I'll observe from here. Bring 'em in quick."

"Strewth!" muttered Snatty to himself, "it's the major. So the old troop's comin' into action 'ere."

For weeks he had scanned every battery that had been near him, hoping to meet his own. But Horse Artillery act with cavalry and work far ahead of the toiling infantry in rear, so that it was not till now, when a pitched battle was in progress, when the advanced cavalry had come in and every available gun was being utilised, that Fate permitted Snatty to see his old battery once more. Looking over his shoulder he said—

"It's all right now, sergeant. There's some guns coming."

"You shut yer mouth and get on with yer work," was the rejoinder, "Wot do you know about guns, I'd like to know?"

"Oh, nothink! But you watch 'em, that's all," said Private Morgan with an ill-suppressed gleam of pride, which made the sergeant wonder.

The line of six guns, each with its wagon behind it, thundered up the rise. There was a shrill whistle, and a hand held up. Then the hoarse voices of the sergeants shouted "Action front," and the wheelers were thrown into the breeching, almost sitting on their haunches to stop the weight behind them: the gunners leapt from their horses and sprang to the gun: a second's pause, then "Drive on," and six limbers went rattling away to the rear as six trails were flung round half a circle and dropped with a thud. Hardly were they down before each gun had its wagon up beside it and the horses unhooked. They too galloped to the rear. In ten seconds there was not a sign of movement. The battery was there, and that was all.

Of the weary infantry who lay and watched there was one at least who could appreciate the merit of the performance.

"Couldn't ha' been better in the old days on Salisbury Plain," was his comment. "But, Gawd! the 'orses 'ave fell away proper. Skeletons, that's wot they are now."

But Private Morgan's soliloquy was again cut short by the remorseless sergeant behind him.

A few curt orders passed rapidly down the battery, then came two sharp reports, followed by the click of the reopened breech, as the ranging rounds went singing on their journey. A spurt of brown earth showed for a second in front of that thick black line a

mile or more away, another showed behind.

"Graze short—graze over," said the major, still staring through his glasses. "Eighteen hundred, one round gun fire."

The order was repeated by a man standing behind him with a megaphone, and followed almost instantaneously by a round from every gun. Some puffs of smoke above the target, the echo of the bursting shell borne back along the breeze, and then for perhaps a minute all Hell might have been let loose, such was the uproar as every gun was worked at lightning speed. A whistle—and in a moment all was still again.

"Target down—stop firing," was the laconic order. "But," added the major softly, "I think that sickened 'em a bit."

The attacking infantry had dropped down under cover, but not for long. Nearer and nearer pressed the relentless lines, sometimes pausing a while, or even dropping back, but always, like the waves of the incoming tide, gaining fresh ground at every rush. The end was very near now, and the bitterness of defeat entered into the defenders' hearts. For they did not know that the struggle for this particular hill, though of vital importance to themselves, was merely serving the subsidiary purpose of diverting attention while greater issues matured elsewhere. They only knew that ammunition was scarce, that they wanted water, and that now at last the order to retire had come. They got away in driblets, slowly, very slowly, until at last nothing was left upon the hillside but a handful of infantry, the battery, and the dead and wounded. The riflemen crawled closer to the guns, feeling somehow that there was solace in their steady booming. The major looked at his watch, and then at the attacking lines in front of him.

"In ten minutes we'll have to get out of this," he said, "bring the horses up close behind us under cover." The minutes passed and the net around them drew closer.

"Prepare to retire — rear limber up."

The few remaining infantry emptied their magazines and crept off down the hill. The guns fired their last few rounds as the teams came jingling up. Their arrival was the signal for a fresh outburst of fire. The few moments required for limbering up seemed a lifetime as men fell fast and horses mad with terror broke loose and dashed away. But years of stern discipline and careful training stood the battery in good stead now. The principle of "Abandon be damned: we never abandon guns" was not forgotten. Through the shouting, the curses, and the dust, the work went on. Dead horses were cut free and pulled aside, gunners took the place of fallen drivers, and at last five guns were got away. The sixth was in great difficulties. The maddened horses backed in every direction but the right one, and the panting gunners strove in vain to drop the trail upon the limber-hook. Beside the team stood Bridd-

lington, trying to soothe the horses and steadying the men in the calm, cool voice that he habitually used upon parade.

Then suddenly from behind a rock there crawled out a strange figure. Filthy beyond words, hatless, with an inch of scrubby beard, and one foot bound up in blood-stained rags, this apparition limped painfully towards the gun—

"Naow then!" a husky voice exclaimed, "stand still will yer, Dawn."

"By Jove! it's Snatty," cried Briddlington, and as he spoke the driver of Snatty's horses gave a little grunt and pitched off on to the ground. Without a word the erstwhile private of infantry stooped and took the whip from the dead man's hand. He patted each horse in turn, then climbed into the saddle.

"Steady now—get back will yer," he growled, and they obeyed him quietly enough. The men behind gave a heave at the gun and a click denoted that the trail was on its hook.

"Drive on," cried Snatty, flourishing his whip, and down the hill they went full gallop.

Safety lay not in the way that they had come, but further to their left, where the ground was bad. At the bottom of the hill there was a low bank with a ditch in front of it, and just before they reached it the centre driver received a bullet in the head and dropped down like a stone. There was no time to pull up. The lead driver took his horses hard by the head and put them at the bank. They jumped all right, but the pair behind them, deprived of a guiding hand upon the reins, saw the ditch at the last moment and swerved.

"My Gawd!" said Snatty, sitting back for the crash he knew would follow. The traces and the pace had dragged the centre horses over in spite of their swerve, but one of them stumbled as he landed. He staggered forward, and before he could recover Snatty's horses and the gun were upon him in a whirling mass of legs and straps and wheels. Briddlington, who had been riding beside the team, leapt to the ground and ran to the fallen horses.

"Sit on their heads," he cried. "Undo the quick release your side. Now then, together—heave." There was a rattle of hoofs against the footboard as Daylight rolled over kicking wildly to get free. Briddlington, at the risk of his life, leant over and pulled frantically at a strap. The two ends flew apart and the snorting horses struggled to their feet, but Snatty lay very still and deathly white upon the ground.

"Don't stand gaping. Hook in again—quick. We're not clear away yet by a long chalk," said Briddlington. Then he bent down and putting his arms round Snatty's crumpled figure lifted him very tenderly aside. "Lie still now," he said with a catch in his voice as he saw that the case was hopeless, "and you'll be all right." But those flash-

ing hoofs and steel-tyred wheels had done their work. Snatty's last drive was over.

"It warn't their fault. I should 'ave 'eld them up," was all he said before he died.

The gun rejoined the battery safely, and defeat was turned to victory ere nightfall, but Private Henry Morgan was returned as "missing" from his regiment.

IV.

To this day, on the anniversary of the battle, in the mess of K3 Battery, R.H.A., it is the custom, when the King's health has been drunk, for the President to say—

"Mr Vice, to the memory of the man who brought away the last gun." And the Vice-president answers: "Gentlemen, to Driver Snatt."

Then the curious visitor is shown a large oil painting of a pair of bright bay horses with a little wizened driver riding one of them.

"That's Snatty," they will say, "a drunken scoundrel if you like, but he loved those horses, and he used to drive like blazes."

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

DEMOCRACY AND HONOUR—THE SCORN OF INTELLIGENCE—THE "GUFF" OF SENATOR SMITH—A SNUB TO THE BRITISHER—MR LLOYD GEORGE, THE SENATOR'S RIVAL—TEN THOUSAND LITTLE CZARS—THE RESULT OF DISENDOWMENT—THE CHURCHES OF FRANCE—EDWARD MOUNTAGU, EARL OF SANDWICH—A GREAT PUBLIC SERVANT—THE PRIZE-GOODS—THE BATTLE OF SOLEBAY.

It is the inevitable consequence of democracy to blunt the honour and to impair the intelligence of those who bow the knee before it. The representatives of the people are perfectly content if their transgressions escape the people's notice. They profess no other ambition than to secure the popular support; and as the people's collective sense of right and wrong is not acute, they easily sink to the lowest standard of morality. Their words and actions represent what they believe to be the easy virtue of their supporters, and as they dare not lead, fearing lest true leadership might lose a vote, they accommodate their own opinions of political rectitude to the opinions of the mob. Even if they make a statement which will not bear examination, they take comfort in the reflection that either the voter will not find it out, or, if he does, that he will not pass a harsh judgment upon a useful exaggeration. The preamble of the Parliament Bill has taught us how highly Mr Asquith values his honour. Mr M'Kenna refuses to be outdone. In searching for arguments to support his Disestablishment Bill, he declared that all "the slum work" in Cardiff was done by the Methodists. It has been pointed out that there are practically no Free Churches in the slum district of Cardiff, where the Church communicants greatly outnumber all the Nonconformists put together. Mr M'Kenna finds facts irrelevant, and doubtless estimates at their proper worth the scruples of his supporters. But, as the Bishop of St Asaph says, "the question at issue is the honour of His Majesty's Secretary of State, and that question is a matter of concern to every citizen of this country." It should be; and yet Mr M'Kenna, perhaps, knows better than the Bishop how far he may profitably travel on the road of "carelessness."

If democracy teaches its leaders to flout the dictates of a plain morality, it persuades them still more effectually to laugh intelligence to scorn. The contempt in which demagogues hold their dupes is evident in every one of their speeches. Even in moments of grave crisis they address vast audiences as though these audi-

ences were composed entirely of imbeciles. They generously credit the men whose support they ask with the brains of rabbits. They pour into their ears floods of words which have no meaning, no coherence. They are sure that the commonest images, the silliest jokes are good enough to dazzle those whose will, in their phrase of grandiloquent flattery, must and shall prevail. Wherever there is a democracy you will find the triumph of shoddy eloquence. England is not alone in her disgrace. The spouters of France, following an evil example, already speak of "la coupe aux lèvres." And if America had done nothing more than produce Senator Smith she need not fear the competition of any rival. Yet this supremacy of nonsense must be set down to the credit of the people. Without the general approval not even a French municipal counsellor, not even Senator Smith himself, could descend to the turbid depths of what the Americans appropriately style "guff."

The wreck of the *Titanic* was Senator Smith's opportunity. This eminent politician concluded the tragedy with a satiric drama of his own. He introduced, into a solemn occasion, the comedy of ignorance. He deemed himself competent to discover the cause of a disaster at sea, though he seemed to think that a water-tight compartment was a refuge into which drowning men might creep for safety, and though he demanded anxiously what was an iceberg and whence it came. But the undesigned touches of farce which this landsman imparted into a solemn discussion are insignificant beside the oration which he delivered to his delighted countrymen. To describe this oration adequately is impossible. We bow before it in respectful humbleness. The fact that it was listened to with some show of gravity makes the whole American people an accomplice in its magnificent absurdity. Senator Smith must share the responsibility with the vast mass of his fellow-citizens. His complete lack of humour is no more than we should expect. The fact that there are ten times as many professional humourists in America as in all the rest of the world does not disprove, rather it explains, the natural solemnity of the people. And Senator Smith's oration suggests that there is something in the American character which suffers no change. In spite of ceaseless immigration, the Land of the Free remains faithful to its primitive love of rhetoric. You may match the rodomontade of Senator Smith in every satire penned against America since the days of Dickens. The blood of God's own country suffers a weekly admixture. And while the type of this confused race, rejecting all European peculiarities, tends year by year to approximate to the type of the North American Indian, its demagogues preserve inviolate the old provincial tub-thumping,

beloved by countless generations of stern-faced Puritans.

But it is time to give a few specimens of Senator's Smith's oratory. The best of the Senator is that he is always equal to himself. He seldom falls below the high level of his own bombast. He calls the *Titanic* "a majestic pile." What else could he call her? "Builders of renown," says he, "had launched her on the billows with confident assurance of her strength." "Builders of renown!" How can we be sufficiently thankful for that magnificent commonplace? Then mark what happened. "The ship went down"—these are the Senator's own words—"carrying as needless a sacrifice of noble women and brave men as ever clustered about the Judgment Seat in any single moment of passing time." As he spoke these words of reckless exaggeration, was there a dry eye in all Washington? We think not. Even the hardened cheek of the Senator himself was bedewed with tears.

Then turned he gravely to the dead captain. "For forty years," said he, "the Storm King had sought in vain to vex him and to menace his craft; but once before in all his honourable career was his pride humbled or his vessel maimed." His pride and confidence were his undoing. "With the atmosphere literally charged with warning signals and wireless messages registering their last appeal, the stokers in the engine-room fed their fires with fresh fuel, registering in that dangerous place the vessel's fastest speed. At that moment the ice stole upon her as hard as steel," &c. Thus the Senator, with much more to the same effect, proving in every line of irrelevant pomp and gushing imagery how brave a "newspaper man" was lost in this talkative lawyer. And so at last he pointed the moral of his address. "When the world weeps together over a common loss," said he, "when Nature moves in the same direction in all spheres, why should not the nations clear the sea of its conflicting idioms and wisely regulate this new servant of humanity?" Why, indeed, should they not? And then in the most splendid bathos within the whole range of oratory, Senator Smith tells us how it shall be done: "to that end wages must be increased"! After a weeping world and Nature moving in all spheres, this collapse of sentiment was a stern disappointment. A still sterner disappointment it was to discover that the Senator had employed all the resources of his matchless rhetoric, had mixed his metaphors, and mingled his tears with the tears of two continents, merely to administer a snub to the Britisher. Surely this highly desirable feat might have been more quickly and more neatly performed. Of what use are Storm Kings and Majestic Piles, if they stand between the Britisher and America's cudgel? Two columns of fine phrases separated us, as we

read, from the Senator's censure. All the blame of the disaster lies, of course, at the door of England, "the Old World where there is no endurance." All the hope of the future is in the hardy American. "Men of strength and spirit there must be, won back to a calling already demoralised and decadent." That is a blow struck at the very heart of England's self-esteem. And there is no doubt as to where these heroes are to be found. "Americans must re-enlist in this service, they must become the soldiers of the sea."

We are not surprised at the Senator's conclusion. We have so long been accustomed to the chastening rod of America, that we ask nothing less and nothing more of her than the compliment of her censure. What does astonish us is the incorrigible provincialism of the Senator's style and manner. Words stripped of meaning and far divorced from intelligence are sorry things, and much as we appreciate the condemnation of America, we would that it had been better and more concisely expressed. Nor can we congratulate ourselves that fustian is the exclusive possession of the United States. Our own notorious Chancellor of the Exchequer easily outdoes Senator Smith on his chosen ground. Mr Lloyd George is falling behind in the race of politics. He forced the pace at the beginning with so blind a fury that he is unable to keep it up. And he takes his ill-success, as weak men always take it, with a manifest loss of temper. In old times, when he felt sure of himself and his position, he was very careful to separate his two manners. He did not permit Limehouse to intrude upon the House of Commons. But now it is all one to him. Westminster and Limehouse, Swansea and Newcastle—they are but so many stages upon which the rhetorical melodrama of Mr Lloyd George can be played. And truly that melodrama was never played with noisier effect than at Mr Lloyd George's last appearance at Swansea. He was at home, and he meant to make the best of it. He echoed with energy and precision all the silly thoughts that were flitting about the heads of his audience. He gave a brilliant example of the true Iberian's trick: he knew exactly what extravagances would be palatable to his friends. Perhaps he reached the topmost height of folly when he declared with unctuous pomp that "the honour of the Nonconformist peasant was as precious as that of the proudest baron in the land." That platitude would be hard to match. A sentence, composed in another vein, runs it very close. "The men for whom they worked," he told his supporters, "grudged them every inch of sunlight, space, and breathing-ground." What can you say to such a statement as this? It does not deserve the compliment of contradiction. To argue with the man who made it would be a

piece of superfluous folly. We can only be thankful that the world tires of nothing so quickly as of a tongue which utters less sense than a clapper to scare the birds.

One or two blossoms from Mr George's anthology of abuse may yet be culled. "Vessels consecrated to the sanctuary are still on their sideboards," he screamed. "The meat dedicated to the altar stock their larders to-day. There are thousands of them." And again: "Go to Primrose meetings; look at the platform. One third of them are probably people who have got Church land. The very primroses which adorn their button-holes are plucked from land consecrated to the service of the altar." Was ever such stuff as this spoken by a Cabinet Minister? It is idle to ask Mr Lloyd George to correct his statements by a reading of history. He is far too busy speaking to read books, and if he read them, it is unlikely that he could understand them. Besides, he needs all the leisure which he can spare, for the composition of that daily letter to 'The Times,' in which he attempts to justify his inaccuracies. Poor man! Great and good as he is, he is not happy. "I will tell you what is the matter with this country," he cried. "There is one limited Monarchy here, and there are ten thousand little Czars." After this his panegyric of Nonconformity must have fallen a trifle flat. We have little faith in those altars with which, Mr Lloyd George says, Nonconformity is covering the land. Of what use are altars if the flame of truth is never permitted to burn upon them?

Senator Smith and Mr Lloyd George, we believe, both follow the profession of the law. Their craft exacts above all things a precise accuracy of speech. The courts are the stern enemies of exaggeration. If Senator Smith and Mr Lloyd George employed the same language in their business as they deem good enough for the people's ear, they would deservedly be left without clients. Such wisdom as is theirs, then, they dedicate to their private advantage. They make no scruple of letting loose their nonsense upon the public. Was there ever a bitterer comment than this upon democracy? These demagogues confess by their careers that for the management of an office some tact and discretion are necessary. They cry aloud from the platform that those who aspire to govern great empires may be quite content with bunkum and claptrap. And neither of them has risen to the full height of his opportunity. Their peculiar gifts would surely be seen to better advantage on the variety stage. Some years ago, in the heyday of Limehouse, the manager of an American music hall telegraphed to Mr Lloyd George that, if only he would appear in New York, he might name his own terms. A similar compliment has now been paid to Senator Smith, who has

been invited to do a "turn" in London. It is by such interchanges of flattery as this that foreign countries are knit together in the bonds of peace, and we regret that we cannot lend our Mr Lloyd George to New York for a while, and console ourselves with the expansive platitudes of America's greatest senator.

Mr Lloyd George asserts that the revenues of the Church in Wales have been diverted from the service of the people. He pretends that he will restore these revenues to the people in the shape of free libraries, which the people does not desire, and which Mr Carnegie, who lives merely to distribute unnecessary books, will gladly give for nothing. However, as the only purpose of disendowment is to deprive the Church of her revenues, the spending of the money taken away is a secondary object. And what is best worth considering is the direct consequence to the Church of this deprivation. The experience of France, which some years ago committed an act of similar injustice, is not without its value for us. The money, of which the Church was despoiled, did not do the State much good. A vast deal of it was embezzled and spent upon unworthy objects. France is no richer to-day than she was. The Church is infinitely poorer, and thus of course the object arrived at by her enemies is attained. But there is one result of disendowment which was not foreseen with sufficient clearness. The churches, which were the pride and glory of France, are everywhere falling to the ground. It is not merely of religion that the French people has been robbed. The ancient fabrics, which for centuries have been the centre of their lives and hopes, are permitted to crumble in pieces before their eyes.

Some time since M. Maurice Barrès, one of the few Frenchmen who are Tories in our English sense of the word, pointed out in an eloquent speech the disaster which was overtaking France. The rain, the snow, and the winters, he said, were doing their work. In many parts of the country, he pointed out, the parishes are too poor to repair their churches; and even where money is not lacking, the violent acrimony of sectarians aids the process of natural demolition. And here the fate of the French Church is far bitterer than the fate of the disendowed Church in Wales will be. In France the churches became the property not of the disestablished Church, but of the municipality, which was permitted to do what it chose with the buildings its representatives refused to enter. The municipality is, then, in a position to extinguish the last spark of religious worship. It can condemn a church as unsafe to harbour the inhabitants of its parish, and can then refuse to authorise repairs. One church, closed by order, has

been opened only once since 1907, — and then that the officers of the municipality might carry off the baptismal fonts to use them as pig-troughs. In another village the Catholics offered to restore the condemned church at their own expense. The assent of the municipality could be purchased only by a gift of 5000 francs. This sum it was beyond the reach of the Catholics to provide, and the church remains closed. But it is the *sous-préfet* of Clermont who, for tact and reverence, deserves the first prize. When the inhabitants of Cinqueux, distressed at the destruction of their belfry by dynamite, called upon him in protest, he said: "What do you complain of? I have made you some superb ruins. Strangers will come and visit them. Put up a turnstile, and ask a franc a head. You will make a lot of money." If that *sous-préfet* were an Englishman, he would assuredly hold office in a Radical Ministry.

It is not the great churches, the stately museums of ecclesiastical France, which are in the greatest danger, though many of them also are threatened. So long as they attract visitors, and yield profit to innkeepers and cab-drivers, they will not be allowed wholly to fall to pieces. It is the small churches which are perishing in France, the churches of remote villages, the churches set upon distant hillsides, the churches of the poor and humble, that have the least chance of escape. And it is in their fate that we may find a warning for Wales. The rage and malice of the Welsh sectarians will be exhausted when the Church, which they hate, is disestablished and disendowed. They could not, though many doubtless would, connive with a smile at the destruction of ancient edifices. There will be no *préfets* to carry on the work of rancour in Wales. But time and weather and poverty will be sufficient to compass many a ruin. For, as we have said, it is upon the poor and humble churches of the hills that disendowment presses most heavily. Where there are rich landlords, the men whom Mr Lloyd George denounces, the churches will be in no danger. It is where the Church and its work are most necessary that rain and snow and winter will do the work of destruction. Not there will the Nonconformists set up their altars. They will be content to congratulate themselves, in the prosperous conventicles of the towns, that though they have stripped many a country-side of church and religion, they have at last appeased the envy and malice of the violent among the brethren.

We have but one fault to find with Mr F. R. Harris's 'Life of Edward Mountagu, K.G., First Earl of Sandwich' (London: John Murray)—it is too long. Of this fault the author is himself conscious. He pleads guilty, especially in the chapters on the Navy and

on the Spanish and Portuguese Embassy. Without neglecting those important topics, he might still have sketched the career of Sandwich in a single volume. Biographies tend to grow longer and longer, and we doubt whether it is anything more than a bookseller's convention, which insists upon their cumbrous size. After all, there are very few men that have lived upon the earth whose lives and characters may not be described in four or five hundred pages. And of these few Edward Mountagu was assuredly not one.

A wise and cautious rather than a great man, Mountagu lived through a perilous age with honour and success. Fortune smiled upon him in his cradle, and only once or twice turned from him her capricious face. He grew up at Hinchingbrooke, the noble house which the Cromwells had sacrificed to a lavish hospitality, and which remained his home unto the end. Bred in Huntingdon, persuaded by his mother to favour the Independents, he espoused the cause of Cromwell, and was authorised to raise a regiment when he was no more than eighteen years of age. Thus early did he assume the responsibilities of life, and premature eld was the inevitable reward of his active precocity. The young Colonel first saw fighting at Hillesden House, played a large part in the triumphant siege of Lincoln, was in the thick of the fray at Marston Moor, and witnessed the surrender of York. While he was fighting with Fairfax in the West, news came that the Royalists had raided Huntingdon. "The King lay at Hinchingbrooke," said 'The Moderate Intelligencer,' "the house of Colonel Mountagu, a gallant soldier." It may easily be believed that the danger which threatened his native county stirred the pulses of Mountagu, who fought at Bristol with a bravery so conspicuous that he and two other young colonels, Pickering and Rainsborough, were chosen by Fairfax to sign the terms of surrender which Rupert was asked to accept. It was his last engagement by land. A colonel of twenty, he retired from the army, and took his seat in the House as member for Huntingdonshire, in place of his father.

The effect of politics upon Mountagu was to turn him instantly to counsels of moderation. Loyal as he was to Cromwell, he approached more nearly, as the years passed, to the temper of his kinsman, Manchester. "Parliament toned down his enthusiasms," writes Mr Harris, "he soon became less of an extremist, and as Cromwell and his followers went forward, Mountagu shrank back. The ardour for the Parliamentary cause which he had displayed at eighteen slowly cooled down; like many another man who had taken up arms, he abhorred radical measures. To beat the King in fair fight was one matter; to connive at his death

was quite another." In other words, Mountagu's experience was the experience of unnumbered generous souls, who in their youth believe that no limit should be set to the progress of ideas, and who presently are horror-struck at the pace with which they and their colleagues are hurled down the hill. The extinction of Parliament, the omnipotence of the army, were distasteful to the moderate conservatism of Mountagu, who retired from politics and heard in sorrow and misgiving the news brought to Hinchingbrooke of the King's death.

It is easy and unjust to charge Mountagu with inconsistency. He was driven to revolt, with other moderate men, by a dislike of the King's innovations. He asked to live his own life and to guard the freedom of his conscience. Above all, as he showed at every step in his career, he was in favour of a settled government. When Cromwell was made Protector Mountagu did not object that "it had something of monarchy in it." The ceremony, with its "phylacteries and fringes of State," did not displease him. He had no natural dislike of pomp and circumstance. He was never averse from the principle of kingship. When in 1657 some zealous champions offered Cromwell a crown, Mountagu was among them. They thought, and thought rightly, that no price was too high to pay for security, and the pedantry of a name did not deter them from what they believed their duty. Cromwell, however, had "doubts and scruples," and would go no farther on the path of monarchy than make his Protectorate hereditary, and so speedily did the hereditary principle break down that it is impossible a crown would ever have fitted the head of Richard.

Mountagu, in brief, had never cried for the good old cause—"a Commonwealth and no single person." He was Cromwell's man, and when his master died, not merely was he conscious of a profound loss to himself, but he saw his country in danger. The "putting down of Richard" was the subject of common talk, and if Richard's natural weakness had not solved the problem, no doubt he would have been put down forcibly. Where, then, should the moderate man turn? The future was in the hands of Monck and Mountagu. Mountagu, as Admiral of the Fleet, wielded a great influence, which Charles II. was clever enough to see. And thus began the final intrigue. The Admiral was plied with letters. Here is the first, drafted in Hyde's hand, a masterpiece of discretion: "I am assured by so many who believe they know much of your mind and purposes," wrote the King, "that you have much affection for me, and a resolution to do me all the service you can, that I think it necessarye you should know from myself that I am very willing to be served and obliged by you, and that it will be so much satisfaction to me to be assured from your-

self that you take my interest to heart, and then you may be confident I shall never expose you upon any rash undertaking for the vindication of it, but concur with you in such councells as are most proper, and shall give you all evidence of my beinge heartily your most affectionate friend."

To this cunning letter Mountagu could not at first give an amiable answer. He was not yet absolved from what he deemed his duty—to stand by Richard Cromwell in his hour of danger. But Richard's resignation changed the colour of events for Mountagu, as for many others. Had there been any chance of keeping Mountagu on their side, the Republicans destroyed it by sending Lawson, as Vice-Admiral, to watch the Cavaliers, and "to balance the power of Mountagu's party, who they knew was no friend to the Commonwealth." Though the discussion dragged on a weary year, the end was certain. England was tired of strife and change. The love of tradition, always strong within her, flamed up afresh. She had had enough of cant and tyranny. She was determined to walk again in the ancient ways. She did not compare the temperament of Charles II. with the wisdom of Cromwell. She knew that Charles possessed what the far greater man could not boast—the habit and lineage of a king. Thus it was easy for Monck and Mountagu to carry out the resolute policy of their country. In the early months of 1660 more letters passed between Mountagu and the King. The understanding between them was complete. "I do not think it agreeable to the confidence I have in you," wrote Charles, "or the trust I intend to repose in you, to say anything of what hath been done in former times, in which I know well by what reasons and authority you were led, and I do assure you I am so far from remembering anything to your disadvantage that I look upon you as a person to be rewarded." Mountagu was not slow in accepting the trust. He assured Charles that the nation was ready to welcome him, and thus concludes: "My accepting this commission, under which I now act, was not without communication with, and advice of, faithful servants unto your Majesty, that I might honestly do your Majesty a service in this capacity."

And thus there arrived, under the happiest auspices, the great day in Mountagu's life. A memorable scene, truly, which even the bustle of The Hague has not often matched. "Every one was astir as early as possible," writes Mr Harris, "and about nine o'clock the Admiral, in clothes 'very rich as gold and silver can make them,' slipped into his barge. By that time the sea was covered with every kind of craft, and there was no more elbow-room on water than on land. About ten o'clock the crowds on shore slowly divided, and a way was made for the coaches which carried Charles and his train. Amid the blare

of trumpets and the rattle of muskets, Charles stepped from his coach and entered a small barque, which the Dutch had garnished with tapestry, and decorated with garlands and crowns of flowers. In this vessel the King—together with the two Dukes, the Duke of Bohemia, the Princess of Orange and her son—was conveyed to the barge in which the Admiral awaited him."

Thus, for the first time, Charles and Mountagu met. Resolved upon reconcilement, they were determined to proceed thoroughly in the business. The King kissed his Admiral on both cheeks, in token that the past was forgotten, and no sooner did they reach London than Mountagu was made an Earl, and decorated with the Garter. That the Admiral deserved all that he was given is clear. Without his aid, and the aid of his fleet, the restoration of the King could not have been made with like expedition and dignity. In the rejoicings which followed, he had his share of honour and glory. The House of Commons passed him a vote of thanks. "God hath done you the honour," proclaimed Parliament, "to be the conveyance of the greatest blessing that ever this nation received; you have landed our Sovereign upon the safest shore that ever English King set his foot upon—the Hearts of his people." The English nation had travelled far from the days of Oliver's supremacy. And the journey had not been made in vain. At last the country had won peace, the peace of a settled government, the peace of a settled Church, the peace of a pleasant and reasonable life. And as for Mountagu himself, he remained under Charles II. what he had proved under Cromwell — a great public servant. He had already discovered that the sea was his province, and had served the Navy faithfully for four years. And it was as Admiral of the Fleet that he henceforth served his King. He fought bravely in the Second Dutch War, and deserves as much credit as any one for the famous victory of the 3rd of June. Then, what might have seemed to most a triumph of seamanship, almost proved the undoing of Sandwich. In 1665 he returned to the Nore with two great East Indiamen among other prizes, whose wealth suggests the glories of the Arabian nights. Pepys looked upon the precious cargoes with an ingenuous wonder. The commissioners, said he, "there did show me the greatest wealth lie in confusion that a man can see in the world. Pepper scattered through every chink, you trod upon it; and in cloves and nutmegs I walked above the knees, whole rooms full. And silks in bales, and boxes of copper-plates, one of which I saw opened." The treasure was valued at some millions of our present currency, and might have filled any commander with pride, any nation with gratitude. On the way home some of the

flag-officers suggested an instant distribution of their shares of the prizes, and Sandwich unwisely assented. He and Penn claimed for themselves goods to the value of £4000 apiece. Some of the officers, however, refused to accept what was offered them, and speedily Sandwich was involved in a grave scandal. He defended himself with all the pride and asperity of his temper. Bitterly did he resent the charge of embezzlement. "The truth is," said he, "not one jot of the dividend was distributed nor any order made (as appears by the date of it) until His Majesty and His Royal Highness had been acquainted with the separation of these goods, and approved thereof." The controversy is old and confused; and though we need not condemn Sandwich too fiercely, there is no doubt that his reputation received a stain which was not wholly washed away save by the waters of Solebay. Pepys, whose shrewd mind understood Sandwich, as it understood all his great contemporaries, summed up the case in a few lines: "The great evil of this year," he wrote at the end of 1665, "and the only one, indeed, is the fall of my Lord Sandwich, whose mistake about the prizes hath undone him. . . . Indeed, his miscarriage about the prize-goods is not to be excused, to suffer a company of rogues to go away with ten times as much as himself, and the blame of all to be deservedly laid upon him."

Though for a while he fell under a cloud of disgrace, Sandwich did not cease to serve his country. He succeeded Fanshaw at Madrid, and presently went upon a mission to Tangier. But it was not until the Third Dutch War, in 1672, that he rejoined the fleet, and then with the deepest misgivings. "Though he was Vice-Admiral of England, and Admiral of the Narrow Seas," said he at Lord Burlington's, "yet he knew no more of what was to be done that summer than any one of them, or any other that knew nothing of it; 'This only I know,' he said, 'that I will die, and these two boys (meaning Harbord and Cotterel) will die with me.'" His dislike of the war was compensated in a measure by the enthusiasm wherewith the fleet received him, and in the battle of Solebay, one of the fiercest in our annals, Sandwich had a golden opportunity of vindicating his courage. He seized it with all the vigour and impetuosity that were his. Unwieldy as he was, he fought with the energy of youth. The fight which Sandwich's ship, the *Royal James*, fought against two Dutchmen, one of them commanded by the intrepid Van Brakel, who raided Chatham, will be for ever memorable. She escaped the *Groot Hollandia*, only to be grappled by a fireship. The ship which might have come to her aid passed her by, and when disaster fell upon her, only one hundred of her thousand men were left unwounded.

Sandwich himself, refusing to leave the quarterdeck, bade the others save themselves as they could. How he died is uncertain. Perhaps he waited till the flames had mastered his ship, and then jumped overboard. Whatever the manner of his death, it was the death of a hero, and the last act of a life nobly devoted to the cause of England.

As we have said, Sandwich was a great public servant. He looked through the forms of government to the security of his country, and served Cromwell and Charles with equal fidelity. That his life should have been written long ago is clear, yet if we do not understand his kindly temper and jovial humour it is our own fault, for he plays the second part in the journal of Samuel Pepys, the shrewdest ever written by the hand of man. And if we have waited patiently for the task to be accomplished, we have not waited in vain. Mr Harris's 'Life' has many merits. It is just and well written, the fruit of much careful research. The author has made excellent use of the papers preserved at Hinchingbrooke, and has added not a little to our knowledge of a period specially favoured by historians. But he has not permitted the life of his hero to be submerged in his "times," and Sandwich stands out in his pages a brave, honest, and sometimes maligned man. At last he is vindicated, and henceforth, to use Mr Harris's own phrase, "in a conclave of seamen he need no longer sit below the salt."

THE ENGLISH IN EGYPT, 1901 AND 1912.

SOME POINTS OF PROGRESS.

BY COLONEL SIR HENRY KNOLLYS, K.C.V.O.

"We verily believe that were it ascertained the moon is inhabited, England would immediately proceed to annex it," was the sour denunciation against our action in Egypt, uttered not long ago by certain Germans less solicitous for the welfare of their own country than to contribute to the ill-will of Germany against England. The astonishing feature of our success in the land of the Nile is that it has been attained in defiance of our original strenuous efforts to cast off this now brilliant factor of our Empire. Our successive Governments, whether duty-loving or party-loving, erstwhile tried might and main to get out of Egypt. In vain. No other civilised nation would face the invidious task demanded by civilisation; and now, in 1912, it cannot be questioned that under our reluctant rule the land of the Nile has been progressing with seven-league-boot strides, almost without a parallel either in old Egypt or new Europe.

In 1901 an article appeared in 'Blackwood' entitled "Egypt: English Waxing and French Waning." I will endeavour to point out some further waxing on our part during the subsequent eleven years, and some further waning on the part of the French element, which has recently acquiesced herein with the generous goodwill largely influenced by King Edward's conversion of traditional hostility into trusting cordiality.

To begin with details, trumpery-like straws as isolated details—significant-like straws indicating the drift of a current. In 1901 the condition of the streets of Cairo compared favourably, it is true, with the dead-dog and rotten-refuse prevalence of ten years previously. But in 1912, not only in the capital, but in such towns as Assiout, Minya, and Luxor, there is an excellence of cleanliness, both of sight and smell, amidst populous poverty, barely to be found in London notwithstanding the reckless squandering of the County Council. Formerly the water-supply, thick and fetid with decaying organisms, was to be regarded rather as an eatable than as a drinkable substance. Now, the "Nile champagne," as the natives call it, though in summer it still kills swarms of babies, no longer annihilates them as completely as a hive of bees stifled with sulphur. Numerous slums have been swept away, together with some of the horrors of drainage, or rather of non-drainage. Even parts of the Mouski, so

entrancingly suggestive of 'The Arabian Nights,' of Haroun-al-Raschid and of Sindbad the Sailor, is in process of being turned topsy-turvy in the warfare against sickness, suffering, and death. Sanitation is rightly given precedence over the picturesque, even as the feeding of some additional millions of human beings, as a consequence of the Assouan Barrage, has rightly been given precedence over the discoloration of the Phylæ temple. In earlier days the hustling and jostling through a motley crowd, the importunities for baksheesh, the wiles of snake-charmers and conjurors, the yelling competition of the struggling donkey-boys, the solicitations of the native cheap-jacks, were all highly characteristic and amusing features of an Oriental city. They were not, however, conducive to orderliness, and in 1912 they were all restrained, not with the bullying of, say, a Berlin civic serjeant-major, but with the quiet and more effectual "off with you" of an Egyptian "Policeman A."

Formerly, the clamorous chorus of baksheesh beggars was rather amusing to a newcomer; then it grew to be tiresome, and finally exasperating. "Please, which is the way to——?"—baksheesh. "Thank you," for picking up a handkerchief—baksheesh. "Oh, what a pretty baby!" "Baksheesh," demanded the mother, "because I please you with pretty sight." I, indignantly: "Why, that very donkey is braying against you. What does he say?" "He say he want baksheesh too." At last the evil becomes intolerable, and its degrading effects glaring.

So effectually have Lord Cromer's efforts to check the abominable baksheesh-begging succeeded, that should you in 1912 bestow half a piastre on some comical little native imp, he slyly watches for the city Cerberus ere he laughingly bolts with his prey. Street traffic and street processions are no longer allowed to work haphazard: they are regulated as efficiently as in Piccadilly. At about 11 P.M. one evening I was present at a Mahomedan fair at Boulak—in old days the local Whitechapel. The gaudy Eastern booths were dazzling with lights; the throngs were dense; the native police visible were so few that they could be counted on the fingers, and apparently I and my companion were the sole English people present. Not a swear or a blow, or a fight or a yell. The crowd constituted an object-lesson to English suffragettes. During the daytime an English lady may wander through the streets unattended with perfect immunity.

On 14th February 1912 a sad *cortége*, in private carriages bearing no emblems of distinction, drove from the "Hyksos" dahabeah, whereon the Duke of Fife had died, through miles of streets to the railway terminus. The route was thickly lined, and the railway square was closely crowded with representatives of numerous Oriental terri-

tories — Egyptians, Arabians, and Nubians, "dwellers of Pontus, Phrygia, and Pamphylia," strangely varied in dress, feature, and form, motionless as statues, so silent as to be solemn, yet withal conveying an impression of great pity for the three sorrowing ladies. Not a peremptory "Stand back" or a "Make way" was necessary. Just a few Anglo-Egyptian constables responding to a wave-of-the-arm signal, and under the directions of Harvey Pasha and Yuzbashi Philip.

The adult natives have, during the past ten years, become a little more independent and not a little more impudent, though they still hold "the word of a Frank" in reverential awe. Smack a native over the head—a practice to which Englishmen were, ten years ago, regrettably prone—if you dare. The chances are he will successfully summon you for assault, for he knows that the sway of the kourbash has at last become extinct, and that he will receive the same justice as a European. Resident Englishmen are apt to declaim in wrath at this even-handedness. Wroth at rightfulness! Would he advocate wrongfulness? And will he not do well to attenuate some of the oppressing haughtiness, not to say savageness, on which a certain section of our countrymen still pride themselves when addressing natives.

The evidence I have been adducing thus far may, I repeat, be deemed superficial; but before going deeper, it will be well to speak a few sentences of the three distinguished Englishmen who, during the period under consideration, have swayed the destinies of Egypt *de facto*, under the subterfuge of Khedival rule *de jure*,—Lord Cromer, Sir Eldon Gorst, and Lord Kitchener.

Few competent judges would now dispute that Lord Cromer was the first to evolve definitely order out of chaos—chaos both financial and administrative. Did he not transform an almost desperate debt not only into solvency but into an annual handsome balance credit?—and that without juggling with figures, or, to quote the pungent expression of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, without "robbing hen-roosts." Did he not compel the Egyptian rulers — rulers forsooth! — notwithstanding persistent opposition, to enter into an era of prosperity in their own country? Did he not substitute for chicane, corruption, and outrageous malpractices, straightforwardness, integrity, and duty? Did he not bring the oppressed fellahin into a condition of ease and of comparative affluence, unknown since the twilight dawn of history? Did he not render the kourbash and the corvée of forced labour as completely a tradition of the past as that of "Simon Legree" and "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and in lieu establish civil discipline in Lower and semi-military discipline in Upper Egypt? Did he not inaugurate the splendid achievements of the Barrage, and the not less benevolent benefits of improved sanitation

and effectual public instruction? Did he not refuse the offer by a Unionist Government to occupy the attractive post of Foreign Secretary in England because his heart was set on bringing to a completion his decades of work in Egypt? Did he not as nobly earn his Earldom as Lord Lister earned his Barony? —only a Barony!

Perhaps in England the appreciation of his splendid services is becoming gradually blunted: it is undimmed in the country where he rendered them. An Egyptian magnate, whose name would carry great weight, in a confidential discussion, and aiming at a climax of approval of our present Consul-General, indirectly uttered the highest eulogy of his predecessor when he thoughtfully declared, "If we cannot have Lord Cromer, let us have Lord Kitchener." It is not an exaggeration to forecast that far-advanced English history, looking remotely back, will assign to Lord Cromer the same nature of appreciation and admiration as is now awarded to Clive and Warren Hastings.

Sir Eldon Gorst, his successor, was beloved during his lifetime, mourned at his death, and throughout regarded as a valuable public servant. But the Fates were not kind to him; the period of his administration was not progressive—even were it not retrogressive. It has been attributed to him that he only half-heartedly discouraged the policy of immediate self-government, and that he indirectly countenanced the Nationalist ferment fraught with much mischief. Discontented Anglo-officials, especially in Upper Egypt, angrily complained that their authority was inadequately supported, and that there was undue pliancy to native resistance. The native newspapers, reviving the cuckoo cry of "Egypt for the Egyptians," proceeded with but feeble repression to the dissemination of virulent falsehood inciting to revolt. Two years ago the demonstrations of the populace in Cairo against the execution of the assassin of Moughab Pasha were so formidable that the entire British garrison was confined to barracks for possible emergencies. I can bear personal testimony to the fact that, in April 1910, mobs of natives of the baser sort were wont nightly to gather in front of European hotels and to "booh" at the English inmates, absolutely unchecked by those responsible for the maintenance of public order.

In vindication of Sir Eldon Gorst, it has been urged—I express no opinion whether rightly or wrongly—that he was manacled as with iron fetters by his superiors, and that he never had fair-play; that not only was indicated to him the general tendency of their policy—as would be perfectly reasonable,—but that he was tied down by restrictive details, thwarted, snubbed, and contravened in his endeavours; that concession and conciliation, no matter what the direful consequences, were imposed on him as the mainspring of

all his measures. It has been represented—I say not whether truly or otherwise—that he was placed between the alternatives of withdrawing from the plough to which he had set his hand or of yielding to *force majeure*. Broken in health and spirits, he chose the latter. His difficulties were solved by his death.

Then dawned the era of Lord Kitchener, so satisfactory in what has been already achieved, so encouraging in its outlook that, in order to avoid the evil of optimism, it behoves me to write with the cold neutrality of an impartial judge,—a tone the less difficult because my personal acquaintance with him is inconsiderable. His antecedents were a guarantee that not for a moment would he have accepted so important a post were he to be unduly shackled. It had been made abundantly clear that he was a successful and capable soldier, an able administrator, an indefatigable worker, and even of Spartan strictness. His mailed fist had never been doubted; his velvet glove had never been suspected; and it was a conjectural problem whether he would prove valuable as heretofore in a semi-diplomatic, semi-autocratic post, demanding the great tact and conciliation with which he had not been credited. The mass of officials who have been recently brought into co-operation with him do not now hesitate to answer emphatically "Yes." Contrary to his former wont as a soldier, it is no longer with him, "Sic volo, sic jubeo." It is declared that consultation and reasoning are freely admitted prior to peremptory decision, though the accursed word "expediency," almost the sole motive action of party government, has been displaced in favour of "duty." He is personally greatly liked by his subordinates. It is even maintained that he exercises the art of conciliation with such dexterity that his opponents in opinion ofttimes cheerfully, genially accept decisions directly adverse to their own views.

The native lower orders have for years been dazzled by the halo of his former successes. The ancient Egyptians attributed semi-divinity to their great kings, such as Seti and Ramses, whom they regarded as "The Word," directly emanating from their god Ammon. There is a faint reflection of this in their feeling towards their present ruler, in no small degree because, with righteous prescience, he caused the bones of the Mahdi to be dug up and scattered to the winds. A sloppy sentimentality denounced "insulting the remains of the dead" whom we can no longer hurt, though for party purposes there is little scruple in vilifying the living who can still be damaged. Pricking the bubble of fanaticism ensured the welfare of the living to a material degree. Their holy Prophet had been desecrated, defied, unavenged, while the perpetrator continued to flourish like a green bay tree. Clearly he is a greater divinity than the old Mahdi. "Koooh-

Nohr[1] know everything; he has great power; he take care poor Egyptian get justice and not get stick. He never get stick from Khedive because now he is 'The Stick' himself." He personally knows and is known by a larger section of the population than any other Englishman; unlike Lord Cromer, he speaks their language with fluent ease; his masculine figure and masterful bearing are not without effect on Orientals greatly dominated by aspect.

To the recrudescence of virile administration is due a further impulse to the progress and prosperity of the country in 1912, which, during the previous two years, had been somewhat halting. The minor features to which I have already alluded, such as repression of baksheesh-begging, regulation of traffic, street cleanliness, and orderliness, are still more pronounced. By the bye, we can scarcely consider a recurrence of the gatherings opposite hotels of hooting rabbles, which I have mentioned in a former page, as within the scope of possibility under the present *régime*. The former mischievous scurrility of the native press has now been restricted into harmless spite. More significant is the general tone and tenor of the English sub-administrators both in the large towns and country districts, on whom the welfare of the inhabitants so largely depends. They are once more stimulated by the staunch support they are sure of receiving from a trusted chief. Simultaneously, their tendency of arrogance towards the native upper officials and brow-beating of native servitors is much attenuated, because the keynote of courtesy to all classes of Egyptians is now habitually sounded from the Legation. For example, at a large garden-party this year at the British Consulate, marked by the lavish luxury of English hospitality combined with the glitter of orientalism, a very noteworthy feature was a group of six or seven tribal magnates in the dramatic garb of the East. This was an unheard-of innovation up to 1912. The unaccustomed invitees clustered apart in dignified, silent shyness, until our Proconsul, his towering form clad in a suit of dittos — "une toilette de tout de même," according to a French reporter — which was in amusing contrast to the gorgeous costume of his guests, in full view of many watchers, strode up to them, shook hands all round in conspicuous friendliness with his "gant de velour"—what had become of the "main de fer"?—conversed with them for some time in their own language, and ultimately caused their stolid oriental features to beam with the satisfaction begotten by gratified vanity.

At one stage in the Tripoli war some desert chieftains, who had been giving trouble by their tendency to co-operate

[1] Kitchener.

actively with the Turks, were summoned to a private conference with Lord Kitchener. "We are soldiers," was the somewhat haughty declaration of the warrior Bedouins. "Our trade is fighting. We must fight." "So glad to hear you say you are soldiers," replied the astute military diplomatist, "because I too am a soldier, and I rejoice to know that on an emergency you valiant fighters will be available for a conscription from which you have been hitherto exempt." The chiefs, half flattered and half disconcerted, gave no further trouble through their partisanship with Turkey.

For long there seems to have existed in the minds of native potentates a smouldering perverseness, a spirit of contradiction which prompted them to reply "No" to every English "Yes" in the first instance, although a grudging concession had been ultimately yielded. In 1912 we may judge that this has to a great extent disappeared. Now, it seems a part of our English idiosyncrasy to be comparatively indifferent to the semblance and insignia of power, provided we retain the substance. Ostensibly Lord Kitchener is a mere Consul-General, without the ceremonial precedence and splendour accorded to the Ambassadorial representatives of the most insignificant European nation. Virtually he exercises the sway of the Governor-General of all Egypt. No momentous measures are undertaken without his cognisance and approval. Almost daily the carriages of Khedival magnates are to be seen in long wait at the British Legation. Thither all the Ministers resort in difficulties, and, seldom resisting, accept suggestions which are separated from fiats only by a thin sheet of paper. A riot takes place at Alexandria; the Egyptian Minister is called strictly to account for its origin and the measures adopted for its suppression. Extensive improvements in sanitation, especially among the populace, are in prospect of execution under British jurisdiction. A revision of schools and public instruction has been initiated from the same source. The Copts—for the most part rather a worthless lot in spite of the episcopal laudations—are badly bullied by the Mahomedans. The Copts found their hopes for redress on the administrative action of "Kooch-Nohr." At the present moment the burning question is that of irrigation under a new aspect. Millions have been spent in flooding the valley of the Nile. In the case of the Delta the process has been so effectual that some of the districts have become waterlogged, and the quality of the cotton crops seriously deteriorated. It is estimated that it will be necessary to spend another two millions in draining the surplus water off the land. Egyptian officials, left to themselves, would passively endure the evil to augment

until the Delta had lapsed into a huge snipe marsh: the English Administration has initiated and grappled vigorously with the task. Lord Kitchener, being also an officer of the Royal Engineers, is quite at home in the complicated calculations of levels, the construction of locks, and the formation of dams. He has called into council Sir William Garstin and other distinguished civil engineers. The work is progressing apace, and there is every prospect that ere long the happy medium of irrigation will have added many millions to the land value of the portion of Egypt which, in area, is equal to the whole extent of Belgium.

Since writing the foregoing, Lord Kitchener's report on Egypt for 1911 has been published, and I refer my readers to the statement of indisputable facts which justify the appreciative terms in which I have expressed myself. The condition of the native population, agriculture, education, and the mixed tribunals are each in turn dealt with; and, as a crowning evidence of prosperity, the revenue of 1911 —amounting to upwards of £16,000,000—exceeded that of 1910 by over £800,000, and has rendered a surplus of nearly £2,000,000. The country's coffers have thus been filled, not by the wholesale depletion of the vilified rich, but by stimulating the prosperous activity of that modern idol whom clap-trap has miscalled "the working poor."

Although in this paper I have thus far restricted myself to the consideration of Egypt proper, my representations would be perniciously incomplete were I not at least to allude to the Soudan and Sir Reginald Wingate. Had not that country been mended of the anarchy and ferocity, the desolation and disaster which formerly devastated a people "rightly struggling to be free"—to use the favourite catch-word of a notable statesman—all Lord Cromer's initiative and all Lord Kitchener's executive action would have been deplorably impaired by this festering sore of a neighbour. At a momentous stage in the fortunes of the Soudan a young artillery officer (Wingate), already distinguished for his war services in Egypt, but only superficially proved as an administrator, suddenly entered into the arena of a combined civil and military government over a vast area of country. After years of patient and self-sacrificing labour, so complete and far-reaching has been his success that he has transformed a Cain-like community into a fairly peaceful and law-abiding fraternity. The noteworthy fact may here be pointed out, that whereas, not so many years ago, professional jealousy angrily restricted the scope of action of the Scientific Corps to Woolwich and Chatham, the four British administrators who have rendered the greatest services to their country

have been either Artillery or Engineer officers: Lord Roberts, Lord Cromer, Lord Kitchener, and Sir Reginald Wingate.

In Wingate is vested supreme command, both civil and military. In emergencies he can enforce his decrees by martial law, which may be defined as no law at all, but merely the will of the commander; practically the normal procedure is by civil rule. Irrigation, cultivation, and trade avocations have replaced misery, rapine, and murder. He has successfully repressed the slave-dealers, and equally successfully waged war against that scarcely less noxious pest, the deadly mosquito of malaria. Before the rule of the Mahdi the population had amounted to eight and a half millions; at a later period holocausts of war and famine had reduced the numbers to under two millions: the figures are now returned as over three millions, with amazingly rapid augmentation. These statistics must be considered irrefragable proofs of prosperity to all but such socialists and suffragettes as despise facts and ridicule figures.

Wingate is not as remarkable for possessing many friends as for having no enemies. Nature has been invidiously partial to him in bestowing on him not only distinguished intellectual capacity, but in endowing him with an attractiveness of manner rarely surpassed.

There are a host of names in the Egyptian annals of late years of those who have successfully laboured and nobly sacrificed themselves to an extent characteristic of Englishmen toiling for their country in far-off lands — such as Milner, Colin Scott Moncrieff, Hamilton Lang, Law, a judge so endeared to the natives that he was designated by them "the just Judge," Garstin, Willcocks, Aird, Slatin Bey (an Austrian), Captain Lyons, Major Brown, Andrew Balfour, and others. But I forbear to indulge further in my humble echo of public appreciation, at a time when vituperation is wont to be greeted as a masterpiece of patriotism.

In mere point of numbers the English constitute a minute, an utterly insignificant, fraction of the entire population. How, then, is our increasing and masterful sway regarded by the remaining mass, which includes aliens from other countries? By the Egyptians themselves, both magnates and fellahin, it would seem, with stolid oriental satisfaction,— silent, perhaps, by the prominent natives, because here, as in England, they are alive to the self-interest of party popularity-mongering; but deep, because they realise the prosperity which accrues to them through our rule. As personages, we continue to be universally and greatly disliked; we are pronounced imperious, exclusive, arrogant, and ungenial. "Would you," I have sometimes asked the cosmopolitans, "prefer some other European Government?" and the answer

has invariably been "No. Were the English administration displaced, most of the prosperous traders would leave the country." "Well, then, Turkey?" With an expression of horror: "The Fates forefend. Better the worst European control than the best Turkish." I was once in a position to question a highly-placed Egyptian on the subject of national independence. Gravely and emphatically he shook his head. "At all events, not for many years to come,—not until by slow process our upper classes have learned how to rule, and our subordinates how to obey. As for the stump-orators from England, the majority of sensible Egyptians have learned that their ravings about Egypt for the Egyptians is but a pernicious self-advertisement. For the last 4000 years, saving for one brief period, we have had no kingdom of Egypt; at the present moment we represent rather a race than a nation, and our vista for absolute self-rule is still far ahead."

Turning to our co-residents of various European nationalities: A short paragraph will suffice for Germany. She is welcome to a free hand in occupying her Egyptian "spot in the planet." The results of her Sergeant-Major-administration in two or three parts of the planet, which she is pleased to call colonisation, have been such that all of her similar efforts in the country of the Nile may be regarded with complacent indifference.

As for Austria and Russia, they have been wise enough to know that they cannot, and to declare that they will not, meddle with Egypt. Turkey dares not. What civilised nations would tolerate corrupt and exhausted robbers forcing themselves into a community which at all events is at last emerging into opulence and rectitude? As to other minor nations, it is sufficient merely to allude to them and then to dismiss them.

The French, however, claim our forbearing, and even generous, consideration. For decades they have felt, like an ever-aching bruise, the tottering of their own influence and interests under those of England. This sensitiveness was accentuated by the fact that their own orders for their ships of war to quit Alexandria on 11th July 1882—the morning when the English opened the bombardment—marked the death-knell of French power in Egypt. In 1912 this tenderness has subsided to a degree which no one would have dared to hope in 1901. They have accepted their waning in Egypt with a wisdom and dignity for which we should surely feel both appreciative and grateful. Their former habitual denunciations of Albion's perfidy, cupidity, and arrogance have almost died away. They have ceased to thwart useful measures "pour embêter les anglais." They no longer start fresh minor diffi-

culties which were liable to be chafed into a quarrel. A single feature indicates a substitution of English for French nationality among the masses. Twenty-two years ago French was the principal language taught in the Government schools. About 76 per cent of the pupils exercising their option of being taught either the French or the English language elected French. The figures are now singularly reversed: over 80 per cent choose English, and under 20 per cent French. Again, the sole medium of communication available for those ignorant of Arabic with native employés is the French language if they are over thirty-five years old; English if they are under thirty years of age. The names of the streets, the advertisements and public notices, have ceased to be in French.

Yet French sentiment and rightful pride should be much solaced by the fact that the spirit of their nation still largely pervades Cairo and many of the principal towns. The shops, especially those for costumes, the chemists, florists, stationers, and sellers of articles *de luxe*, show their national taste and skill in displaying their merchandise; while their method of business, their system of checks, their atmosphere of manner and language, are almost as much Gallic as in Paris, and they ply a very lucrative trade. The numerous cafés are counterparts of those in the Rue de Rivoli; the carnivals and street shows are essentially French, and three or four French newspapers are published daily. The official language is French, and—touch of the ridiculous!—young English Government employés are sometimes expected to exchange correspondence in a dog-dialect which they fondly term French.

The foregoing are merely illustrative trifles. The fact that France has retained for herself a fine pre-eminence in antiquarian research, in the disinterment of historical monuments, and in the reconstruction and preservation of noble temples, is no trifle. For example, take Karnak, the kernel of old world-famed Thebes. There the local chief of the French "Service des Antiquités," Monsieur Legrain, has since 1894 patiently, ploddingly, carried out the work of excavation and the far more difficult task of reconstruction. Mariette, justly reverenced as an Egyptologist, many years ago recorded in writing his certainty that he had brought to light every fragment of architecture and statuary at Karnak, and that whoever might undertake further investigation would assuredly lose both his time and his money. In eighteen years Monsieur Legrain has there brought to light some thousands of statues and several buried buildings. So late as last March he discovered an entombed statue of an Egyptian king, Merkouri, who lived about 2500 B.C.; and if I may be pardoned a sentence of egotism—the sensation of being

one of the first to "pass the time of day" to a memorial of 3400 years back[1]), whose last greeting must have been with those who were cotemporaries of Noah, was one of intense awe. Monsieur Legrain has already reconstructed forty-eight gigantic columns, broken fragments of which he pieced together with magic skill, and he anticipates that within two years he will have restored the Hypostyle Hall to its original aspect of grandeur and beauty unsurpassed by any other building in the world. His feat will be a proud monument of French science and architectural success.

Alas! the reconstruction of the Temple of Hatasu, on the western bank of the Nile at Thebes, serves as a sad counterfoil to French skill and taste. Under the auspices of an American Society, which has furnished the funds, the executives, whose names I forbear to gibbet, have succeeded in renovating into hideousness this jewel of an 18th Dynasty temple, about 1500 B.C., which, left to its natural condition, is of extreme beauty and grace. The reconstructors, far from following the principles of Monsieur Legrain and restoring according to original construction and aspect, have thought fit to indulge in their own vandal variations. For example, they have added the anachronism of arches; and, still worse, have bedaubed pillars and walls with a staring gamboge yellow, producing a flaunting effect which seems to challenge to rivalry the large tourist hotel on the opposite bank of the Nile.

A retrospection of ten years' changes in Egypt must inevitably prompt a prospection into the near future. While guarding against optimism, probable hindrances in the progress of the good towards the better seem remote. Doubtless there still exist some anomalies and inconveniences —notably the theoretical subordination of Egypt to the Ottoman Empire, the payment of tribute to Turkey, and the preposterous and pernicious Capitulations which will automatically expire in 1915, but which now enable malefactors of any insignificant European nationality to escape lawful jurisdiction. Patience and persuasion can hardly fail to sweep them away. It is unlikely that wanton "cussedness" will tempt any one of the Great Powers to obstruct the cause of civilisation without any advantage to themselves, and for the stupid purpose of snatching up any stick wherewith to beat any envied dog. It is as plain as the multiplication table that, under present auspices, finance, administration, orderliness, wealth, and general

[1] The interpolation of commentators in Reference Bibles that the first man in the world was created B.C. 4004 years is balderdash not warranted by the original Scripture record. Monsieur Legrain asserts it is as certain as any fact on earth or in sky that human beings in a comparatively advanced state of civilisation existed at least 20,000 years B.C.

prosperity must develop into still further excellence. Serious intestine troubles should have but a minimum scope among a people who are already learning to contrast the former reign of infamous cruelty, servitude, and poverty, with the new rule of justice, comfort, and affluent ease. The party of National Independence has dwindled into a condition of atrophy which the spouting of English demagogues will fail to resuscitate. The leaders of Egyptian thought, who have long been scheming for the weakening of English influence and the withdrawal of English troops, are now accepting the occupation of the country as steadfast fact for many years to come. The mere word "Protectorate" was hooted ten years ago; its employment is now almost advocated. Whatever be the official nomenclature adopted for our rule, it is beyond question that the whole tenor of feeling, action, and demeanour of each and every Englishman in Egypt indicates an unconscious conviction that he is residing in a portion of the British Empire, and not in a foreign country.

It has been surmised that Lord Kitchener's sphere of activity may in the near future be shifted to Constantinople. Alas for the day when he quits prematurely a country whose prosperity and welfare he has so immeasurably furthered! If he remains to bring to fruition the noble undertakings he has begun, and if in fulness of time the population be transformed into a nation fit for, and capable of, self-government, the latest generation of Egyptians will gratefully revere the names of our illustrious Proconsuls, Lord Cromer and Lord Kitchener.

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CONTENTS.

Will Home Rule be Rome Rule? By J. P. Mahaffy, 153

The Lady of the Canaries. By St John Lucas, . 160

Stalking the Red Deer of Otago. By A. E. Leatham, 191

From Sepoy to Subahdar. By Major MacMunn, . 201

Tales of the Mermaid Tavern. By Alfred Noyes, . 213

VI. The Burial of a Queen.

Hocken and Hunken. A Tale of Troy. XI.-XIII. By "Q.," 222

"The Great Straloch," 243

Musings without Method, ... 252

The Folly of International Sport—The "Decay" of Cricket—The Game and the Spectator—The Art of Letter-writing—Cowper's Letters.

The Making of the Panama Canal.

By Charles Paxton Markham, . . . 263

The Constitution under Cromwell and under Asquith.

By Arthur Page, ... 275

The Political Situation, ... 288

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WILL HOME RULE BE ROME RULE?

BY J. P. MAHAFFY.

HERE is a question anxiously debated by all classes of Irishmen who are educated enough to consider it. The answers given are so contradictory, that it is worth while to set them out clearly and show the reasons on which each of them is based.

The Protestant answer is quite unhesitating. Home Rule will increase enormously the present influence of the Romish priesthood, which is already too strong. When they have a Parliament consisting mainly of local Roman Catholics, they will not regard the interests of the Protestant minority. They will succeed in their great object—the control of higher, as well as of primary, education. They will discourage and even suppress any free expression of thought in history or philosophy. In all elections to local professional posts no Protestant will have a reasonable chance of election with a Roman Catholic body of electors. Hence the most intelligent and competent young Irish Protestants will leave the country. Possibly the emigration of the poorest and most ignorant peasants from the South and West may be stayed; a new and far more fatal emigration will be promoted of the better classes (in the strictest sense) from the more civilised districts, and our wretched country will relapse into a condition somewhat like that from which Italy and Spain are with great difficulty emerging. Home Rule will therefore deal a deadly blow to the intellect, the commerce, the general progress of the country. Even under the present system it is almost impossible to find a jury to convict a Roman Catholic priest, on the clearest evidence, of any misdemeanour. What will it be when the whole

government of the country is controlled by their influence? Such in brief is the answer which the staunch Irish Protestant makes to this vital question.

Let us now turn to the Roman Catholic answer. But in doing so, we must set aside (1) the persons mainly incriminated—the priests, who do not for one moment deny that their Church should be supreme in faith and morals, and who are perfectly aware of the stupid blunder of politicians, who propose to sever faith and morals from politics and the other affairs of human life. Of course there is no dividing line, and if there were, who but the Pope of Rome could have any authority to draw it? (2) We must also exclude from the discussion the mass of ignorant poor, who live in dread of the anger of the Church, and would not dare to discuss calmly any limitation of her power.

We here accordingly confine ourselves to the answer given us by the small but important body of the Roman Catholic laity who are educated, and by the still smaller but equally important body—indeed it can hardly be called a body—of ecclesiastics who are not enslaved by their system.

These men tell us freely in private—for as yet they dare not speak out in public—that the one chance of shaking off the tyranny of the priesthood is to establish Home Rule. For this will remove the protecting ægis of the English Government, which has for three generations past been seeking to govern Ireland—or rather to keep it quiet—by securing the co-operation of the Romish clergy. It is for this purpose that religious houses are allowed to absorb vast sums of public money, and are protected from investigation and criticism. They are not taxed, as being charitable bodies, and any attempt to inspect their houses has been resisted by them or foiled by the Government. They have acquired immense property in Ireland, and have built many great churches and monasteries; they have bought numerous seats of the old gentry, and turned them into convents; they "educate" a vast number of children, with large help from the State. Why on earth, then, should they desire Home Rule? For the one chance of breaking their power is this very change, of which the Protestant is so afraid. There is, in fact, no chance of escape from this tyranny except to put power into the hands of local bodies who will insist on the inspection of religious houses and the taxation of Church property where it is duly ascertained—in fact, in preventing the Church from absorbing the wealth of the country, as it had done before the Protestant Reformation. Let us take the example of Dublin. Any one who examines the bounds of the monasteries sequestrated by Henry VIII. will find that they owned most of Dublin

and its suburbs; and if any one were to prepare a map of Dublin, marking in black the sites recently acquired by the Church, the public would be amazed to find out how many fractions of the city are now in their hands. And they are acquiring more and more every year. Home Rule, therefore, need not be Rome Rule, but the only practical method of curtailing or checking it.

These are the two attitudes assumed by Protestant and Catholic critics, and they believe themselves in such direct contradiction with their opponents that if either proposition is proved the other must necessarily be false. But even Logic (which they despise for want of understanding it) would tell them that in real life a great number of apparent contradictions are only contraries or subcontraries—that is to say, they may both be false or both be true. This is particularly the case when the element of time comes in, for many a new policy, which has apparently been successful, hides within it faults which presently not only neutralise the expected good, but supplant it with evil consequences. The answer to the original question is therefore not so easy; it is not "either A is B or not B" —yes or no. The conclusion to which I have come is that both propositions are likely to be true, but in different senses and at different times. I invite the reader to follow my argument, which is purely historical and quite free (I trust) from the prejudices of creed and party.

The first manifest result of a Home Rule Parliament will be that the Roman Catholic majority will assert itself, and that for all appointments and emoluments in the gift of the majority the Roman Catholic candidate will have the preference. This need only mean that patrons will prefer voting for their friends and relations, a very natural thing to do, and need not imply any hostility or injustice in the minds of the electors towards Protestant candidates.

And if any complaint be made it will be answered by the argument I have heard a hundred times. "You had your chances for the last 300 years. All that time Protestants got everything. It is our turn now. It is only the 'redressing the balance.' If, as you say, we now appoint Catholics who are not competent to places of emolument, how many such places did not Protestants obtain long ago? Surely turn about is only fair play." To this argument, which never suggests the notion of intolerance or oppression on the part of the majority, the practical reply will be that able and energetic young Protestants (as has been already stated) will emigrate. I venture to quote my own case. Being no party man, and watching the signs of the times, I foresaw, as any impartial observer could foresee, the ruin of the Irish landlords, the decay of their Church, and the con-

sequent ascendancy of Roman Catholic interests. I spoke out about it long ago, to the great indignation of my own class, and of their leader, Lord Randolph Churchill. But they brought no sound argument against me, and I was so persuaded of the correctness of my forecast that I encouraged my sons to settle elsewhere than in Ireland. The Irish landlords now know, by bitter experience, that my words were true. The Irish Protestant clergy and their flocks, scattered through the South and West, and indeed the centre, of Ireland also, know that almost everywhere their congregations are diminishing, and that their real danger is not oppression from without, but atrophy from within.

I hold then that by a natural, quiet process, without any persecution whatever, Home Rule will become Rome Rule, and that the greatest mischief which turbulent Romish priests can do to their own cause is to accentuate and proclaim their increasing power by meddling with the civil life, or by interfering with the civil rights of the remaining Protestants. So likewise the Irish Legislature, if it have any wisdom, will take care to guard existing Protestant rights, and proclaim its high impartiality, if it desires to let the great social forces work their quiet way, and the mere natural preference of electors for their own creed to be the leaven which will leaven the whole lump.

What will be the general result on the future condition of Ireland? The outlook to a historian is gloomy enough, though it may rejoice the heart of a Cardinal. Ireland must become much poorer in intellect and enterprise by the loss of its Protestant population, and will sink into the condition of Italy till 1848, and of Spain till this century, where a priesthood morally far inferior to the Irish Catholic clergy held tyrannical sway.

But I shall be told that this pessimism ignores the great force of national sentiment aroused by the pride of *autonomy* and of the enlightenment produced by education; that independent Ireland will wake up from its lethargy, and that the Roman Catholic peasantry, long down-trodden under the heel of Protestant ascendancy, will assert itself even against its own clergy, and develop new talents and accomplish new successes. I devoutly hope that this forecast is true, and that some day it will be brilliantly verified, but I will now tell the reader why I think this resurrection will be long delayed, and also why I see no small danger if it be accomplished suddenly. But one thing of course is obvious: whenever it does take place, Home Rule will cease to be Rome Rule.

When I was a boy I was always being treated to the prediction that with the spread of education the power of the Roman Catholic priest must decline. The National Board of Primary Education, originally intended to be purely

secular, was supposed to be the death-blow to their power. Yet fifty years have passed since then; there has been a system of secondary education and several universities added to the other. Yet not only is the priesthood stronger than ever, but they have managed to get such control of all the education of the Catholic youth of Ireland that there seems at present no sign, or hardly any sign, of the waning of their power. If the curious reader desires to know how such a strange phenomenon is to be explained, I can tell him. Nothing is easier than to assume the guise of educators and to make boys learn a great many subjects, and at the same time to teach them not to think. When the boy has to master many text-books, when he has to train and tax his memory to learn as much as he can off by heart, it is quite easy to keep him from thinking, and even persuade him that thinking about things is mere mischievous waste of time. Above all, why should he waste it thinking about religion. That has been given to him ready-made, handed down from his ancestors, supported by his teachers. Hence he grows up in exactly the same religious condition as his fathers. He may perhaps neglect the practice of his creed more than they did, but its dogmas are there, and these he does not question.

What are these dogmas? I will only mention those in which the power of the priest resides. First, he performs, by virtue of his ordination, the miracle of Transubstantiation every Sunday and holy day. To use the quaint but quite devout phrase I have often heard: "He holds his God in his hands every week." Secondly, the belief in future punishment—eternal and terrific torture in hell—is kept alive by tracts like *Hell opened to Believers*, by Father Furniss, adorned with amazing woodcuts; and these tracts, which can be bought for 2d., are widely spread among the poor and the ignorant. Hence the power of the priest at the deathbed. The viaticum of the Church is regarded as a sort of passport to the next world, and the refusal of the priest to give the sanction and help of the Church to the dying man is a calamity not only to him, but to all those that love him and are gathered about his bedside.

So long as these dogmas are not questioned the power of the priest must remain unshaken, for he is endowed with supernatural powers, and hence, among the simple and religious, his person is sacrosanct and his judgment infallible. The reader will perhaps exclaim that I am putting the Catholic priest on a level with the medicine-man of savages. I do nothing of the kind, for the daily influence of the priest in promoting morality, and even piety, is often very great. He generally dissuades from crime and promotes virtue in his flock; but the secret of his strength is not there—it is in his miraculous

powers. If it be true that with the small minority of educated Catholics his person is separated from his office, and he is not regarded as sacrosanct except in his sacred place, there is unfortunately a counterbalancing fact, a wholly worldly fact, which has given him control of the richer classes in recent times. His order has increased enormously in wealth, and therefore in the power which wealth necessarily confers. He formerly controlled only the poor, now he controls a great number of the rich. And so it results that if any professional man in Ireland incurs ecclesiastical censure, all his Catholic clients are advised to abandon him, and as he can no longer expect to live by the support of Protestants, ruin stares him in the face. Hence the Catholic professional layman, if he does think independently, will not express his opinions in public. I believe that at the first advent of Home Rule this lamentable state of things will rather be aggravated than improved.

But you will say, surely the day of the intellectual resurrection of Ireland must come! It has occurred in Italy, under the shadow of the Vatican; it is occurring in Spain; it must surely also occur in Ireland. Looking at the matter historically, I am sure that this forecast is, in the long-run, correct. But, as I have shown just now, it will be delayed much longer than most people imagine.

The further question remains: How far will this emancipation, when it comes, tend to the welfare of Ireland? If we consider analogous cases, there is no probability that those who throw off the bondage of the Roman Catholic Church will tolerate the restraints of any creed. They will become, like the mass of Italian men, free-thinkers at least till the day of their deathbed, when they will allow the priest to be called in, and will submit in fear and anxiety to his ministrations. For it is wellnigh impossible to eradicate the dread of the future from any mind imbued with the associations of Christian heredity. But for the rest I can only imagine an Irish Legislature, representing an Irish society emancipated from its creed, as no better than that most godless of all assemblies, the Italian Parliament. Any one who has studied the ethics of that Parliament, in particular the conduct of its Government formerly in Erythrea, recently in Tripoli, will know that the introduction of similar free-thinking, not only in creed but in ethical problems, will be no great gain to any country. The emancipation from the Roman Catholic creed in Ireland is very likely to bring with it similar consequences. So deeply do I feel the dangers of such a development, that I can well imagine any sincere Protestant patriot deliberately preferring the continued tyranny of the Roman Church to the alternative of a free-thinking Ireland.

These considerations amply

justify the now classic reply of a Western peasant to a Radical English politician who asked whether he was not longing for Home Rule. "To be sure I am, and so are the whole of us. But for all that, I'm thinking Home Rule is very like heaven." "I am very glad to hear you say so; but tell me exactly why." "Why? Because the whole of us is beggin' and prayin' for it all our lives, but when we come to die and face it close, divil a one of us but would sooner stay as he is." This attitude is by no means singular, as the man rightly expressed it, for the hope of heaven is not at all so strong in the Irish peasant as the fear of hell. It is not often that the priest dilates upon the future happiness of good men, and when one eloquent curate, within my knowledge, expatiated with godly fervour on the splendours of the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse to an old man dying in misery in a hovel near the village of Ballinamuck (*the town of the pig*), he only obtained this recognition of his efforts: "Well, yer Reverence, as ye're so intimate with th' Almighty, I wish you'd tell Him from me, that if it's the same to Him, I'd sooner stay in Ballinamuck."

THE LADY OF THE CANARIES.

BY ST JOHN LUCAS.

I.

COMPARATIVE poverty, when one is wandering abroad, often proves a better leader than Murray or Baedeker. Early in the magnificent autumn of 19— I had been walking and climbing in the Ampezzo Dolomites, and found, when I decided to go to Venice for a fortnight, that I had spent far too much money on guides for Cristallo and the Drei Zinnern. The result of this discovery was that instead of sojourning in some huge hotel on the Grand Canal where one's fellow-countrymen abounded, I was driven to seek refuge in a tiny pension on the Zattere, which was dignified with the noble and ancient name of Cà Loredan. I was most fortunate in my necessity: although I had previously visited Venice on many delightful occasions, I felt very soon that this was the first time when I had really lived there. My rooms were sunny and clean, and from the windows I beheld an ever-changing vision of ships, brown-sailed and oddly rigged, with gaily painted hulls; all day long there was a haunting savour of tarry ropes, and also, it must be admitted, an intermittent ancient and fish-like smell; beyond the ships was the Giudecca, rose and pearl in the morning, tawny in the day, and a heaven of gold and brown at sunset; to the left I beheld the domes of the Redentore and San Giorgio Maggiore, and to the right San Giorgio in Alga and the dusky mainland beyond Fusina. In addition to these delights I soon had the pleasure (for abroad it is a pleasure, whatever it may be in England) of knowing most of my neighbours by sight. They were all picturesque, and the children were charming.

My landlord was a retired gondolier, Zorzio Bresanin—a person who combined the most piratical aspect with a simple and cheerful soul. His wife, Marietta, came from Treviso—Treviso in Italy, she called it—and was exceeding stout and a very good cook. Her one defect was a habit of singing out of tune all day long, but the words of her songs were so naïvely amusing that I could easily forgive her. I was the only guest in the little pension; Marietta assured me that she had several English clients, all artists; but the autumn season had scarcely commenced, and the heat, in which I revel, and the mosquitoes, which I despise, had driven the majority of tourists to the sadly vulgarised Lido.

I passed a blissful fortnight of solitude in the Cà Loredan, writing and reading in strict moderation, staring intermin-

ably at architecture, idling in gondolas, bathing, and dining with painters at a little restaurant in the Rioterrà di Sant' Agnese. Zorzio and Marietta were afraid that I should become depressed and lonely, but their company, with that of Marco and Todaro, their offspring, was entertainment enough for the most gregarious of mortals. Venice, the Bride of the Sea, is also *par excellence* the Mother of Gossip; in a very short time I seemed to have heard the private history of every one who dwelt on the Zattere, nor were the most intimate affairs of the Giudecca unrevealed. As for my countrymen who live on or near the Grand Canal—I wonder if they have any notion of how the Venetian tongue can wag? I regret to state that I encouraged the Bresanin family to develop this vice of loquacity with all my powers; the stories that they told were commonplace enough, but their method of narration was always fresh, picturesque, and highly comic. The children inherited the failings of their parents; they would talk by the hour of their neighbours, and the candour of their criticisms was often extremely startling. Marco and Todaro, for example, would come to my room on some more or less superfluous errand (not without an eye to the reward —an apricot each — for such attentions), and while Marco conversed with me Todaro would observe the gay world from the window. In the middle of our conversation a wild cry would arise from Todaro; Marco would beg my pardon and rush to join his brother, and they would both lean out of the window, chattering and gesticulating like a pair of insane monkeys. On my demanding the reason of their excitement the answer would be something to this effect—"It is nothing, Signore, only Dario the *barcaiuolo* making love, as usual, to the wife of Pinelli the seller of pumpkins;" or "*Ecco! Ecco!* the old Lordessa with the golden wig! Who would think that in her youth she was the *innamorata* of gentlemen innumerable!" On these occasions I would haul them hurriedly back into the room, praying with great fervour that the Lordessa with the golden wig, or whoever else the victim was, might be happily ignorant of the highly expressive Venetian dialect. Once they were removed, however, from their usual environment, Marco and Todaro became living pillars of propriety, and on the occasion when I took them for a trip in a gondola to the Lido, thinking that their comments on the heterogeneous crowd which haunts that famous shore would be amusing, they sat side by side near the bathing-place, which they steadily refused to enter, holding each other's hands, and staring at the motley throng with immense, melancholy eyes, —looking, indeed, so much too good for this vile world that an amusing Frenchwoman of my acquaintance came to demand where I had found the "deux chers petits anges

d'Andrea del Sarto." If she could have heard the criticisms passed on her by the angels when they returned home she might have felt inclined to modify her impression of them.

With such diversions I led a pleasant life until the end of September, when a change happened. I returned one night from Torcello to find Marietta in a state of garrulous excitement: she had received a telegram from England announcing that a lady of my country was coming to stay at the Cà Loredan, and that she would arrive next evening. I inquired if she were an artist; Marietta did not know, but affirmed that she was not one of her former clients, adding that her name was Farnay, which sounded improbable. I received the news with secret distaste; but I had the grace to offer to turn out of the best room, which I was occupying, in favour of the unknown. Marietta, after protesting volubly for a quarter of an hour that nothing in heaven or on earth would force her to disturb me, agreed to my proposal, and told me where I should live in a way that betrayed how she had all along intended my transplantation. Next day I moved my belongings into a smaller room which adjoined my old one, and found to my joy that I could still obtain access to the balcony. Probably though, I thought, the invading Englishwoman would soon monopolise that point of vantage, and would even use it for airing her garments, in the objectionable manner of my fellow-countrymen at Swiss hotels.

The next day was wet, so I passed the greater part of it reading and writing. About six o'clock the rain ceased, and I walked with a friend to the gardens, afterwards dining at a small restaurant on the Schiavoni. When I returned to the Zattere I found that the new client had arrived at Cà Loredan. She was, it appeared, extremely tired, and had gone at once to her room. Her name was Fane (Farnay was Marietta's Latinisation). I was assured that she was not an artist, but a Lordessa who wore very beautiful clothes and had brought a surprising quantity of trunks and bandboxes. She knew no Italian, and was weary, so weary. When she heard that there was an Englishman staying in the house she had evinced great curiosity as to his name, and had shown symptoms of disappointment when she had learnt it.

It seemed strange that anyone should have advised a lonely Lordessa who knew no Italian to stay at Cà Loredan, where only that language, or rather its Venetian equivalent, was spoken. Zorzio, it is true, professed to be acquainted with English; but his excursions in our tongue were limited to a song which he had learnt in his more active days,—an artless ditty, warbled through the nose, and consisting only of these words—

"Gondoliery
Drinky-beery"

with repetition *da capo ad lib.* He was capable also of uttering a series of fantastic howls which bore only the slightest resemblance to human speech and were supposed to be French. Marietta, on the other hand, knew no language but her own, and gloried in the fact. Fortunately she was sensible and sympathetic, so that if the Lordessa wasn't a complete idiot I might still be spared from the obligation of acting as interpreter a dozen times in the day.

I bade Marietta good-night and went up to my room to write a letter. When I had finished it I decided that the hour was too late for work, and I opened the window and looked out. The clouds had drifted away and the sky was splendid with stars; there was no sound except the soft noise of water lapping the sides of the anchored ships and the eerie cry of some gondolier making his way along the narrow canal by the Ogni Santi. I wanted to go out on the balcony, but being afraid of disturbing my neighbour, I contented myself with a chair at the window, lit a cigarette, and sat for a long time defying the mosquitoes and watching the great yellow moon that rose above the Redentore.

Suddenly the deep silence was broken by a peculiar and quite unmistakeable sound; somewhere near me a woman was sobbing. The sound seemed to come from the balcony: I peered out, but could see no one. It continued, desperate, convulsive, and mixed with broken words. I felt a chill about my heart, and stepped on to the balcony. There I saw that my neighbour's window was half open; the sound certainly came from her room.

The idea of any one alone with some heavy trouble in a strange place depressed me, yet even then I could not help thinking that a woman who neglected to fasten her window when it opened on a balcony to which other persons had access must be either strangely ignorant or deplorably careless. Probably she had been dead tired with her journey, but at any rate it was fortunate that she was under the wing of the excellent Marietta! I stood for some moments irresolute, whilst the sobbing continued, wondering whether I should inform the *padrona* that her newly arrived guest was ill, or whether it would be more kind to make a noise on the balcony and trust that the unknown would shut her window and sleep away her grief. Whilst I was still hesitating, chance decided my difficulty; a strayed reveller came along the Zattere singing at the top of his voice, and seeing me on the balcony took off his hat with a flourish and shouted good-night. I responded, and next moment I heard the sound of a window being hastily closed. I went into my room, and waited for some time in fear that the sobbing would begin again, but weariness or the knowledge of my proximity had evidently stifled it. There was absolute silence in Cà Loredan.

II.

When I awoke next morning the sunshine was flooding my room. I lay for some time drowsily wondering if the events of the night had, after all, been merely the fiction of a dream, and hoping, if they had really happened, that the strange Lordessa had been the victim of no worse a plague than a mosquito or a nightmare. Then, as I became wide awake I heard another unusual sound, which arose, apparently, from the balcony outside my window; the air seemed actually to be thrilling with the song of birds. On the Zattere such melodies were rare, — rare, indeed, was any kind of bird, possibly owing to the existence of a huge and hungry army of vagabond cats. It was true that Marco kept a disreputable old crow in a cage, but I was quite certain that this morose fowl was not the author of the trills and roulades that were being executed so ably outside; he had a single note and it sounded like a curse. Having dressed, I looked out of the window and perceived at the far end of the balcony a large cage which contained half a dozen canaries, each of them singing with the energy of a prima donna in her greatest scene. Their triumphant music attracted the attention of the passers-by; there was a group of children below which, after being periodically ordered off the face of the earth by the officious Marco and Todaro, withdrew a short distance and then reassembled in exactly the same formation as at first; Marietta came out into the street and gazed with rapture at the musicians, and Marco's old crow, whose wicker cage hung on a nail near the front door, emitted a loud squawk of disgust at frequent intervals. I decided that the canaries belonged to the strange Lordessa, and that the strange Lordessa was an old maid.

She had already gone out, I was informed when I went downstairs. Apparently she had been seized with a desire to visit the office of the unromantic but indispensable Mr Cook, and disdaining a gondola, had set off to walk there. I inferred from this that she was no stranger to Venice or had a bump of locality; otherwise, even with a map, she would almost certainly lose her way in the labyrinth of streets between the Campo San Vitale and the Piazza San Marco. I asked Zorzio why he had not advised her to go by steamboat: Zorzio, it seemed, had attempted to do this, but his English, according to Marietta, was quite incomprehensible to the Signorina, who, for her part, spoke a dialect which completely baffled Zorzio. The latter great linguist, finding mere words of no avail, took to gesture, and by drawing elaborate pictures of steamboats in the air and making strange sounds representative of their puffing had apparently frightened the poor Lordessa out of

the house. The episode seemed to have caused Marietta some annoyance; she remarked that to expect *forestieri* to speak Italian was, by the body of Bacchus, no habit of hers, but an Englishwoman should at least be able to converse in English.

I worked all the morning and for a part of the afternoon, whilst the canaries sang both loud and clear. At five o'clock, when I went out for a stroll, their mistress had not returned, and when I came back to the Cà Loredan shortly after sunset I found that my earlier fears were justified; the Lordessa had lost her way as soon as she crossed the iron bridge near the Accademia and had wandered, apparently, into the dilapidated region beyond the Cannaregio. There she had revolved aimlessly for a couple of hours until she came to a church (probably the Madonna dell' Orto) and took refuge in it from the heat. After resting for some time she set forth again, and, instead of finding her way to the Grand Canal, seems to have worked across to the Arsenal, where a benevolent sentry took pity on her and sent her back to the Zattere with a small boy who knew some English as her guide. When she arrived she was on the verge of collapse, and had gone to her room at once.

I uttered suitably sympathetic comments on this tale of woe, as revealed by Marietta, but privately I decided that the Lordessa was a rather silly person. Nowhere in the world, certainly, is it so easy to lose one's way as in Venice, but even if one is ignorant of Italian one can always find a kindly native who will point out the proper direction. Also, lone females, in my opinion, ought to refrain from tramping feverishly round foreign cities when various other methods of locomotion are available. The Lordessa's escapade had one good result: there was no repetition of the sounds which had haunted me on the previous night. Apparently it had tired her hugely, for she kept to her room all the following day. When I inquired after her health, Marietta seemed to think that my question concerned the unknown lady's mental condition, and replied that she was *molto gentile*, but somewhat simple: she added that the Lordessa wrote many letters but received few.

The strange lady's experience of the Venetian labyrinth had evidently counteracted any desire that she might have previously possessed of seeing the splendours of palace or paintings; she remained all day in her room; her meals were served there —she lived, it seemed, on boiled eggs,—and she only went out for a short walk on the Zattere very early in the morning. For nearly a week we inhabited the same house, living within a yard or two of each other, but I did not see her once. Every morning I heard her on the balcony attending to the canaries, but on no occasion did she speak to

them or encourage them to sing by whistling. Not that they needed any encouragement; the sun of Venice had intoxicated every one of the little prisoners, and they gave shrill thanks all day for its bounty—much to the detriment of my work. That any one should come to Venice in September and be content to live in a bedroom and feed canaries was quite ridiculous and almost pathetic: I could only conclude either that Miss Fane was unwell, which Marietta assured me was not the case, or that she was in trouble. If the latter conclusion was the true one, it seemed to me that her method of living was both unhealthy and depressing. I felt inclined to send her a note, saying that there were such places as St Mark's and the Frari, the Lido and Torcello; that the most maidenly of old maids need have no fear in a gondola, and that if she wanted an escort, I was the most respectable of middle-aged Englishmen, and well known to the chaplain of the church in the Campo San Vio. The thought of her sitting all alone, day after day, got on my nerves to such an extent that my work was ruined; but her desire for privacy was so obvious that I did not dare to send a note, and it seemed that she was determined to give me no opportunity of meeting her in person. I moved my writing-table to a window that overlooked Zorzio's backyard and strove to forget her.

This singular state of affairs continued, as I said, for nearly a week, and then, one evening when I came in late from a theatre, I heard once again the sound of weeping in her room. It continued till far in the night, and at last I told myself that this was more than common humanity could bear, and I went to sleep with my head under the bedclothes, swearing a mighty oath that I would confront the Lordessa next morning and attempt to offer her my sympathy and aid.

I rose very early and dressed hastily, for I was fearful of losing my one opportunity of a meeting. At first I had intended to go out and walk up and down the Zattere until she appeared; but second thoughts warned me that this course might startle her—for it was almost certain that she did not know me by sight,—and I decided to wait on the balcony until she came to feed the canaries. It was a long time before she appeared—probably she had only gone to sleep, poor thing, when she was utterly worn out with crying, —and when, at last, I saw her, I felt a great thrill of surprise, for she was a young girl, and I had hypnotised myself into the firm conviction that she would be an antique and angular old spinster. She came out swiftly, and without looking at the magnificent pageant of colour that was glowing in the early sunshine, went straight to her foolish canaries. Apparently she had not realised that I was at the other end of the balcony.

I prepared to attract her attention, but before doing this I watched her for a moment as she stooped to feed the birds. Even my purblind masculine eye was able to perceive that she was dressed in the extreme of fashion: she wore a very tight skirt, which exposed a considerable length of dove-coloured silk stocking; the tops of her high-heeled boots matched the stockings; her smartly-cut blue coat was decorated with little rows of quite superfluous buttons, and on her head was a black hat which seemed to me as large as an artist's umbrella, and was adorned, apparently, with the whole wing of a well-grown goose. In short, to the purblind masculine eye she was overdressed — at any rate for her present environment. She reminded me painfully of the Front (I think that is the word) at Brighton.

I uttered some conventional greeting, and she turned swiftly with an exclamation of surprise. I was impressed at once by the incongruity of her clothes with the character of her face. She was pretty, with a faded, timid kind of prettiness; her eyes were large and pale; her nose was too small, and her mouth was thin and expressionless. Oddly enough, she reminded me at once of a canary—a foolish canary which had tried to disguise itself in some other bird's fine feathers. As she stood there she looked flurried, defiant, and insignificant. With a truly damnable lack of charity I concluded instantly that it was a mosquito which had made her cry.

She did not respond to my salutation, but stood looking at me, making, I could see, an obvious effort to appear self-possessed. I explained that I could not avoid imagining that she was in trouble, and that if I could be of any use to her she had only to command me. She froze at once; her mouth became hard, and she stared at me with a disdain that was rather overdone. Then she spoke in a chirping voice, and with an affected diction that was lacking in charm.

"Thank you. You were mistaken," she said. "Much obliged."

Her manner, rather than the stilted phrase, told me at once that she meant to snub me. Evidently the canary could peck. I made another effort.

"You're quite sure?" I asked.

"Positive," she replied, with a funny jerk of her head. I waited in silence for a moment, watching her. This seemed to annoy her; she turned her back on me and said in high staccato accents, "Please go away. You have no right to come here. You know that quite well."

This was definite, at any rate, and I retreated ingloriously into my room. I regretted my interference, but was too much amused to be angry. There was only one word that completely described Miss Fane: she was plainly and unmistakably a shrew. Also, she had the tart and

snappish manner which is usually possessed by ill-bred persons who have no sense of humour. I decided that I disliked her heartily, and resolved that nothing on earth would induce me to speak to her again; and yet—there was something pathetic about her; that was undeniable. Her lonely life, the flaunting incongruity of her clothes, her air of a pert board-school mistress who never forgets that she has passed an examination and is therefore superior to nine-tenths of humanity,—all these peculiarities, which would have been merely irritating in England, formed a problem on the Zattere. Why was she there?

III.

For the next fortnight I saw nothing of her. Marietta gave me a room at the top of the house, and Miss Fane was able to exercise an undisputed sovereignty over the balcony on the first floor. Occasionally, when I peered from my lofty eyrie very early in the morning, I was granted a vision of her as she paced—always in a new and ultra-fashionable dress—to and fro along the Zattere. I beg the reader to believe that I did not incite Marietta to gossip, but Marco informed me gratuitously that the English signorina never left the house except on these occasions, and that no one came to visit her. About the tenth of October I went for a week to see the Giotto frescoes at Padua, and drifted on to Mantua and Cremona,—two ancient towns which I had formerly omitted to visit. When I returned to the Cà Loredan I found that Miss Fane was still there. I did not rejoice at the discovery, for I had been almost certain that by this time she would have grown weary of Venice and taken herself and her problem off to Tooting or Balham. In the course of a conversation with Marietta, who welcomed me with effusion, I happened to allude to the continued sojourn of Miss Fane, calling her as usual by the title of honour which had been bestowed on her before she arrived. Marietta—much to my amazement, for she was the most tolerant of *padrone*—made a face, shrugged her voluminous shoulders, and retorted briefly that Miss Fane was quite the opposite of a Lordessa. I changed the subject, and could only conclude that my countrywoman had been giving her hostess a hint of her true nature.

My relations with Miss Fane, or rather my non-relations, continued for some days exactly as they had been before I went to Padua. I met her once on the stairs, but she took no notice of me; it occurred to me then that she looked gloomy. Yet, if this was the case, her melancholy found no expression in her toilette, which grew daily more elaborate; on the occa-

sion when I met her she was wearing a white dress of some wonderful soft material and a huge crimson hat with a black bird, like Marco's crow but greatly rejuvenated, impaled on its crown. Her one redeeming point, I decided, was that she managed to combine her evident passion for finery with a disdain for showing it off before the crowd in a popular hotel. A woman who dressed as she did was certainly under no obligation to live on the Zattere for cheapness' sake, and the fact that she remained there at least argued a lack of one kind of vulgarity.

The weather continued to be perfect, though shortening days and chilly nights heralded the coming of November. One afternoon I was making my way to the Accademia when I met Pearse, the painter, in the Rioterrà Sant' Agnese. Pearse is an artist of great originality and merit, and his remarks on pictures are always illuminating. I tried to persuade him to come with me to the gallery, but he was in a wilful mood, lured me into a gondola, and insisted on my going with him to a ridiculous cinematograph show near the Public Gardens. After we had gazed for some time at extraordinarily swift and deadly scenes of robbery and murder, and (I blush to narrate) at still more extraordinary revelations of domestic impropriety, we emerged from the satiated atmosphere of the little theatre, drank grenadine and seltzer at the *café* next door, and went to the gardens to watch the sunset. A band was playing, and there was a large throng of people moving to and fro. We sat for some time smoking and staring idly; Pearse, who had a supreme contempt for the feminine fashion of the moment, drew little caricatures on the backs of envelopes whenever some of its more outrageous examples happened to pass before us.

I had wearied of the fashions and was gazing across the lagoon when I heard Pearse utter an exclamation. "Here comes the flaunting extravagant queen," he said; "I often see her on the Zattere, of all places in the world. She's the worst of all of them —speaking strictly artistically. Really, she's as good as gold. That's what makes her so pathetic."

I looked round, and saw that he was gazing at a girl who was advancing towards us. I cannot describe her costume in detail; it is sufficient to say that she wore a bright pink dress covered with a long silken scarf that was glittering with sequins and golden thread; her hat and parasol matched the dress, and in the former a cluster of immense artificial crimson roses bloomed fiercely. She was by far the most conspicuous figure in that bright assembly, and every one turned to regard her — some with smiles which I did not like. She walked with an ungraceful irregular gait, as if the heels of her shoes were unwontedly high, and she looked dismally self-conscious. Some moments before she reached us

I had recognised her as Miss Fane.

When she passed the chairs where we sat, she looked at us —she seemed to be looking at every one, and then to avert her eyes ostentatiously as soon as she encountered the gaze of a stranger—she looked at us with a funny sidelong glance, recognised me, and then, to my extreme amazement, bowed stiffly. We took off our hats, and I began to rise from my chair; she paused for a moment, then turned her head away awkwardly, and continued her much-criticised progress along the path. Pearse began to apologise to me.

"I hadn't a notion that you knew her," he said. "Who is she? She's always about alone in the early mornings when I go off to paint. I've never seen her at any other time until to-day."

I explained, and gave him an outline of the enigmatic existence of the Lordessa. He was interested. "It's devilish odd!" he exclaimed. "I wonder why on earth she wears those clothes. If she dressed very simply she'd be pretty, in an insignificant sort of way. As it is, she looks like a portrait by ——, R.A., of a provincial mayor's daughter rigged out to receive Royalty. Look at those *rastas* laughing at her! It would delight my soul to kick them."

I restrained Pearse from this rash though righteous act, and gave him my reasons for believing that Miss Fane was perfectly capable of taking care of herself. He listened to me attentively, and when I had finished speaking he said: "She may have snubbed you then, but she wanted to speak to you to-day. If I hadn't been here she would have spoken. She's in some trouble, I'm certain. I saw her face when she looked at you. If she comes back and finds you alone, she'll speak. I'm going."

And he went. I remained on my chair by the side of the path. In the distance I could still see the pink parasol drifting like a huge flower through the crowd in the direction of the Punta della Motta. It vanished for a few moments, then it reappeared and was stationary for some time; at last it began to move slowly towards me. The sun was about to set, and the throng in the gardens was thinning rapidly.

After all, when she had reached the place where I sat I thought that she was going to pass me without repeating her sign of recognition. She had, indeed, actually gone a few steps beyond me, and then she turned, almost as if against her will, and came back. I rose and murmured some commonplace remarks about the sunset.

She did not answer, but sat down stiffly on the chair which Pearse had left, closed her parasol, and began to twist its silken tassel with nervous fingers. Now that she was near I was able to see that her face was pinched and haggard, so that her fine clothes seemed more inappropriate than ever.

I sat down by her side and waited for her to speak.

She opened her lips several times, but no words came. I had been right, when I saw her on the balcony, in concluding that she was young; she was certainly not more than twenty-five, and in spite of her elaborate clothes she looked just like a tired child. She faltered an apology for troubling me with her private affairs, and then her mouth began to tremble and I was assailed with a fear that she would break down altogether. But she managed to control herself, and when at last she spoke again her voice was calm.

"I know nobody in Venice," she said. "I thought that perhaps you might be able to tell me the name of a good jeweller."

She paused, and looked at me doubtfully with her strange pale eyes. I was somewhat amazed by her demand. Mechanically I glanced at her hands and saw that she was wearing several rings which appeared to be of considerable value. A diamond and pearl pendant, too, which hung from her throat, was certainly worth money. I told her that I could give her the address of several jewellers in the Piazza San Marco, and added that if she went alone to them she would have, vulgarly speaking, to pay through the nose.

She averted her eyes from mine and, leaning forward, began to draw patterns in the gravel with her parasol. "That's not what I meant," she said in a low voice; "I have some jewels which I want to get rid of."

"If you'll take my poor advice," I responded, "you won't get rid of them in Venice,—that is, if you wish to sell them outright. Of course, if you want to exchange modern jewellery for old you may be able to make a fair bargain, provided always that you have some one with you who speaks Italian and knows a few of the tricks of the trade. But you've come to one of the worst places in the world for the other business."

She gazed at me forlornly.

"But I should get *something* for them?" she asked.

I decided inwardly that the Lordessa was a rich and silly young person who had suddenly grown tired of her stock of trinkets and would make any sacrifice to replace them. "Oh, yes! you would get *something!*" I echoed cheerfully.

She prodded the path with her parasol. Then she looked at me, and again her mouth quivered. "You don't understand!" she said. A flood of crimson swept over her face. "I *must* sell them!" She gasped out the words, and suddenly the tears coursed down her cheeks. She dabbed at them feverishly with a tiny embroidered handkerchief and sniffed loudly. A light dawned in my perplexed soul: I remembered the ever-recurring boiled eggs; I remembered the odd change in Marietta's attitude towards her guest, and I felt a hearty twinge of con-

tempt for my own superficial assumptions. I hesitated for a moment, and I suppose the poor Lordessa thought that I was unsympathetic, for she sniffed again, quite fiercely, and remarked that it was stupid of her to have troubled a perfect stranger with her private affairs.

I tried to reassure her by speaking gaily. "I'm not a perfect stranger," I said, "nor, indeed, a stranger at all. We have met, we inhabit the same luxurious abode, and therefore I have a kind of right to ask you a rather impertinent question. Are you really alone in Venice without money and friends?"

She nodded, without looking at me. "Absolutely," she answered in a dull voice.

"But you are expecting some money which hasn't arrived?" I demanded. She shook her head without speaking. I stared blankly at the roses in her magnificent Parisian hat and wondered if I was dreaming. She continued to excavate gravel. More tears began to roll down her cheeks, and this made me decide to treat the affair as one of the slightest consequence. If she broke down altogether the situation would be ghastly.

"And how long has this ridiculous state of things been going on?" I asked.

"Three weeks," she answered. "I spent the last money I had exactly three weeks yesterday." She turned to me with a feeble flare of resentment. "I'm glad you think it ridiculous," she murmured, with a gulp at the last word. Poor Lordessa!

"Of course it's ridiculous!" I cried. "Here were you, an Englishwoman, staying in the same house with an Englishman who, as you could easily see, was a thoroughly respectable, dull, ordinary person, and rather than breathe a word to him you went on worrying about this silly business! Thank goodness you've had the sense to come to me at last! You must be hugely tired of hard-boiled eggs." My method was fairly rough, and again she seemed a little resentful.

"I wouldn't have come," she answered, "but this afternoon the landlady flew into a rage. I couldn't understand what she said, but she was awfully angry, and waved her arms as if she was going to murder me. Her husband quieted her, and I came out to try and find a jeweller's. But I couldn't find any shop that looked respectable, and then I wandered on here and saw you and your friend."

She gasped hysterically, but her tears had ceased, and very soon she became less agitated. To give her time I began to talk learnedly of the Venetian jewellers, and she punctuated my remarks at intervals with Oh yes-es and I see-s. But she was not listening; I knew from her expression that she was beginning to enjoy the bewildering luxury of having disburdened herself of some part of her secret trouble. When I ceased to speak she looked at me with an oddly ambiguous air.

"Of course, I should hate to sell any of them," she said, almost peevishly.

"Then you shan't," I asserted stoutly. But inwardly I wondered how the sale could be long postponed unless she was prepared to let me pay at once for her journey back to England. The situation was becoming peculiar, for I had hardly any money left, and the mere act of contemplating the Lordessa revealed, in some mysterious way, that she was one of those people who, if they trusted in you, would lean on your sympathy with all their weight. Responsibility was hateful to her, and she had found an opportunity of shifting its burden.

"Would you mind telling me," I asked presently, "why you came to Venice with so little money? Or did you lose your purse?"

She shook her head. "I started from England with all my savings," she said; "I was a governess for several years." A distinct note of pride came into her voice. "I was with Sir Thomas Loane Baronet's family," she continued; "I expect you have heard of him."

"And you grew tired of Sir Thomas Loane and his family, and yearned to see Venice?" I suggested.

"No," she answered. "On the contrary, we were all most intimate. But I had special reasons for coming here."

"Ah!" I murmured sympathetically. I waited for her to speak, but she seemed to hesitate. "What I can't understand," I said, "is how you were relieved of your savings during your journey. You can't have spent them in Venice. Please don't think me impertinent; I can't help concluding that some one has swindled you."

She looked offended. "I am quite capable of taking care of myself," she said. "I kept enough for my journey and a little over, and I spent all the rest of it in Paris."

I gazed at her with wide eyes.

"In Paris?" I echoed.

"Yes," she said snappishly. "In Paris, on clothes, and hats, and jewellery. I didn't speak French very well, so I suppose I was swindled, as you call it. But I didn't care. I had plenty."

Decidedly the Lordessa grew more and more mysterious. A governess who left the happy home of Sir Thomas Loane, Baronet, to squander all her savings on ultra-fashionable garments and pearl and diamond pendants in Paris, and subsequently whirled off to flaunt her new splendour in Venice with scarcely a penny in her pocket!—it was the most curious specimen of feminine aberration that I had as yet been privileged to encounter. There seemed to me only one possible explanation of her conduct.

"Did you think," I asked, "that as soon as you reached Venice you would find a situation—a position, I mean, as governess? Did you come out here on that account?"

"No," she answered once

more. "I shall never be a governess again," she added. I stared at her, completely bewildered. Was she mad, or was I wildly mistaken in her, and did she know it, and enjoy leading me on? I gazed searchingly at her face; she looked quite incapable of high emotions; under more normal conditions she would be, I suspected, shallow and a trifle silly, but she was certainly not guileful. As I looked at her she blushed deeply, turned away her head, and made a queer sound in her throat.

"I may as well tell you everything," she said. "I was coming out to meet somebody."

"Ah!" I cried, illuminated at last. "A friend?"

"Yes," she said. "The gentleman that I am engaged to." And then she broke down and began to sob. By good luck the gardens were almost deserted. I felt sick at heart. So this was her secret, and the inappropriate finery was her trousseau! It seemed a pretty miserable business. I let her cry for a little time, and then I implored her to make an effort towards self-control. Soon her sobs grew less violent, and she turned a tear-stained face towards me. Her eyes were red, her hair was dishevelled, and her monstrous hat was tilted at a most unbecoming angle. Altogether she was a spectacle that would have awakened the pity of the most stony-hearted of mankind.

"And did he—your *fiancé*," I asked, "arrange to meet you when you arrived in Venice?"

She nodded forlornly and her lips quivered. "Yes," she answered, "he gave me the name of the place where we are staying, and said he would meet me at the station. We were to be married at once. He couldn't come to England because he is very busy, and his relations didn't want him—wanted him to marry someone else." She sniffed loudly when she mentioned the relations.

"And he never met you, and you don't know where he is?" I cried.

"No, he never met me," she answered. "He is at Trieste. He's in business there—a very good position—in a shipping firm."

Thus, gradually, the whole affair was revealed. It seemed that her betrothed—whom at first she called Mr Arden, but afterwards Lewis—had failed in his duty owing to a strict attention to business in Trieste. When the Lordessa arrived in Venice she found a letter from him which announced that he was prevented by a temporary complication in the shipping trade from joining her immediately, but that he would arrive in the following week. Miss Fane wrote at once, offering to meet him at Trieste, but he ignored this suggestion, and she did not dare to set out for that port, being afraid that before she arrived there he would have started for Venice. Ten days later another letter had come from him reporting further complications in the shipping trade. By this time the poor lady had spent her last soldo and was living on

credit at the Cà Loredan,—a state of affairs which she did not disclose to Mr Arden, being anxious, as she informed me, to conceal from him that she had spent all her money in Paris because she wanted to surprise him with her frocks and finery. In the course of her revelations I obtained some insight into the temperament of that mysterious person: he had, it seemed, been irritated by the sobriety of her clothes when he had known her in England, hence her amazing self-surrender to the highest excesses of fashion. Other remarks that she made led me to conclude that he was probably a bad-tempered, domineering brute, and that she was mortally afraid of him, though she was still immensely in love. That he was in the latter condition also I found it difficult to believe: a lover who had sworn to meet his bride in Venice would have fulfilled his promise even if the shipping trade of the whole universe was in danger of everlasting collapse.

When she had finished her story the sun had set, and a cool breeze was blowing across the lagoon. I took her back to the Zattere in a gondola; she had regained calmness, and actually displayed some interest in the buildings which we passed, asking me to tell her which of them was the Doge's palace. I managed to let her know that I would settle affairs with Marietta, and asked her to accept a small loan that would meet her current expenses. "Of course," I said, "you will be all right in a week."

"Oh! of course," she answered almost brusquely. But I saw an expression of doubt invade her face. In any other circumstances I should have been amused by the fact that she uttered no word of thanks.

IV.

I spent the next ten days, much to Marietta's amusement, in taking the Lordessa for voyages in gondolas, and in trying to please her with the finest works of art and architecture that Venice has to show. These excursions, except that they kept her from brooding, were not wholly a success, for Miss Fane, I very soon discovered, had no eye for the beautiful, disliked novelty and strangeness of any kind, and was always thinking about the smell that haunted some ancient palace or divinely picturesque *rio*. Her mind was pre-eminently fussy; in spite of her trouble, the question as to whether she should carry an umbrella or a parasol agitated her wonderfully every morning; she took no interest in the Venetian populace, but was eager to know the names and probable wealth of the English and Americans who had rented palaces on the Grand Canal. She actually preferred steamboats to gondolas; the latter, she said, were queer and made

you feel as if you were part of a funeral, but the steamboats might have been in England. She compared everything with its English equivalent, and found that all manifestations of Venetian life were slovenly and unbusinesslike. When I took her to the Accademia the only pictures that interested her were portraits in which she could trace some resemblance to people whom she had known at home.

Browning once said that a *post-mortem* would reveal the name of Italy engraved on his heart. On mine, if a similar operation be performed, will be found the word Venezia. I hope I am not utterly intolerant: I am bound to admit that the Lordessa's perpetual blindness to the charm and splendour of my best-beloved city ended by exasperating me intensely. But nevertheless I continued doggedly to whirl her round churches and palaces; I even took her to Torcello, which she thought dirty (St Mark's Church had been merely damp), and to Murano, and—*la dernière auberge!*—to the cemetery, where she admired some of the most unpleasing modern sculpture. Meanwhile Mr Lewis Arden gave no hint of his continued existence, funds ran low, and my work in London waited for me in vain.

One morning, as we were returning down the Grand Canal from a visit to the Giardino Papadopoli, a woman in a gondola that was passing our own bowed, smiled, and asked me to come to see her at an address which she indicated by pointing to a small palace near the Rialto. I recognised Mrs Perivale, one of the most amusing and kind of my Venetian acquaintances, and resolved to take advantage of the invitation as soon as possible. Much to my surprise, the Lordessa, as soon as we were out of earshot, told me that she knew my friend's name. "I met her several times in England," she explained, "at Sir Thomas Loane's. She is a cousin of his." She paused for a moment, then said slowly, "She knows Lewis."

This information interested me. Mrs Perivale was the most sympathetic woman in the world, and it seemed to me that the Lordessa was sadly in need of female company and counsel.

"You ought to go and see her," I said. "She's a charming person and would be delighted if she could help you. Do go! She's not a gossip."

But the Lordessa had assumed a peevish expression with which I was by this time only too familiar. "Oh! nothing would induce me," she replied curtly. "I couldn't bear another woman prowling round my private affairs. Besides, she would remember that I was the governess, and patronise me. Now that I'm independent I don't intend to be patronised ever again." I said nothing, but inwardly groaned over her ill-timed pride. Next afternoon I went to call on Mrs Perivale.

I found her at home and alone. She gave me tea in a long cool room that was

panelled with dark wood and bright with flowers and cretonnes. She had admirable taste, and had collected many beautiful pictures and bronzes; several of these adorned the room, and I observed that the work of the late Perivale, who was an R.A., and died rich, was not represented on her walls. She seemed pleased to see me, but I had not been with her more than five minutes before I realised that she was contemplating me with secret amusement. Her friends accuse her of possessing a *nez railleur*. I knew her well enough to have no scruples about demanding the reason of her suppressed mirth.

She smiled, elevated her gold lorgnette, and inspected me carefully through it.

"May I ask you a very impertinent question?" she said.

I intimated permission. She waved the lorgnette and leant forward. "Do you really find her amusing?" she asked.

"Her?" I echoed foolishly. She nodded. "You know whom I mean," she said. "Erica Fane."

"Ah! you saw her?" I cried.

"I recognised her at once, though she has certainly altered. When I knew her she was evidently in the chrysalis, but now——! I often met her at the Loanes' place in Surrey. She didn't seem to remember me."

"Oh, she remembered you," I murmured.

"Quite so," she retorted. "I said 'didn't seem.' And now you go about together everywhere, looking as gloomy —as gloomy as two prisoners fettered wrist to wrist! To a student of human nature you present a most enthralling problem."

"We are not engaged to be married," I said.

"Then I am more in the dark than ever," said Mrs Perivale, "for if I had been invited to choose from all the world two people who had absolutely nothing in common, I should without hesitation have selected you and Erica Fane. You may take it as a compliment if you like."

I meditated a moment, and then asked her if she knew anything of Mr Lewis Arden. Her expression changed at once; she looked at me searchingly and nodded.

"I know a very great deal about Lewis Arden," she said; "and I hope he's not a friend of yours, for I don't like him at all. But what has he to do with Erica Fane?"

"He *is* engaged to her," I said.

"Oh, oh!" cried Mrs Perivale. "Then why——?" she left the sentence unfinished, mused for a little while, then said, "His people won't rejoice, I think. Is he in Venice?"

"No," I answered, "he isn't, and he ought to be." And then, knowing that she was the kindest person in the world, I threw caution to the winds and told her the whole story. She listened in silence until I had finished, asking no questions, and when at last she spoke, it was plain that she felt nothing but pity for the poor Lordessa. We had a long and serious discussion,

and at the end of it she made some scathing comments on the moral turpitude of Lewis Arden. "I know him well," she said. "He means to keep her here kicking her heels until she's tired of it and goes back to England. He doesn't mean to come!"

For the honour of my sex I protested against this conclusion. She silenced me with a stern forefinger.

"He doesn't mean to come," she reiterated. "But he shall!" she added. Her mouth set in a line of tremendous decision.

"Unless we go to Trieste and kidnap him in a sack, I don't see how it's to be done," I said forlornly.

Mrs Perivale smiled.

"You leave it to me," she said. "He will come. If it's wrong to interfere in other people's affairs, I am going to be a criminal. I'll produce that young man in Venice before the week's out; if I don't, I give you free leave to throw all my bronzes into the Grand Canal." She rose, crossed the room, and opened a fine old *escritoire*. "The decks are cleared for action," she said. "You're a non-combatant; you must go away. Come and see me again very soon, and try to persuade that poor thing to come with you. And do, for goodness' sake, tell her to wear respectable clothes. She'll shock my servants."

She dismissed me with a smile which showed that she had already almost forgotten my existence. I went back to the Zattere, thanking Heaven for all thoroughly capable, kind, and unscrupulous women, and neglected to inform the Lordessa that I had visited one of them.

What terrible and secret machinery of intrigue was set in motion that evening by Mrs Perivale I do not know; she would never make any communication to me on the subject, and I learnt nothing from other sources. Possibly she did nothing but write a piteous letter of entreaty. At any rate, whatever her method, the result was completely successful. Two days later the Lordessa met me on the stairs of the Cà Loredan. Her eyes were so radiant that for a moment I did not recognise her. She waved a telegram wildly.

"He's coming to-morrow!" she cried. "Lewis is coming! I've just had this! Of course I knew he would all the time!"

The last words betrayed how great a fear had haunted her, and I felt that Lewis certainly didn't deserve the enthusiastic welcome which he would doubtless receive.

"*Enfin!*" I growled.

She turned on me like an angry little cat.

"Oh, you never believed in him!" she cried, and she marched away upstairs with her ridiculous nose in the air. She was not dignified, for her skirt was inordinately tight. I watched her as she went, thinking that the scene formed an absurd end to an absurd episode. For the blessed fact that it *was* the end I felt deeply thankful. She had never liked me.

V.

My first vision of the reunited lovers was granted a few days later as I strolled past Florian's. At one of the innumerable little tables I recognised the Lordessa, in her largest hat, sitting by the side of a swarthy young man who was eating a lemon ice. She was gazing at him with pride and affection, and was talking with evident gaiety: the young man, however, seemed to be giving most of his attention to the ice, though he nodded at intervals without removing his eyes from his spoon. I thought that he looked saturnine and rather bilious, but at any rate the Lordessa was happy at last.

He was staying, I heard later, at Danieli's. Every morning at ten he called at the Cà Loredan, and for about an hour marched his *fiancée* solemnly up and down the Zattere. Then he would disappear—it seemed that he had business to transact in Venice, —and the Lordessa would remain in her room until four o'clock, when she issued forth in a magnificent toilette and presumably went to meet him again. In the week that followed his arrival I encountered him twice—once on the Zattere and once in the Piazza San Marco. On the first occasion Miss Fane bowed to me, but showed no inclination to make me acquainted with her betrothed; on the second she pretended not to see me. I concluded that she still bore a grudge against me for having suspected Arden of perfidy, and consoled myself with the assurance that probably we lost little by not meeting; for I am no adept in the art of feigning friendliness, and Arden certainly looked uncommonly morose.

Marietta had by this time quite forgiven the Lordessa, and took an immense and highly sentimental interest in the lovers. Marco and Todaro disliked Arden heartily; he spoke Italian and had apparently snubbed them with severity and point. Marco had a theory that he was an Austrian spy. I had to admit, when I was questioned by Mrs Perivale, that I had heard nothing about any arrangements for a wedding; but as I no longer enjoyed the confidence of the Lordessa, my testimony was of little value.

It was high time for me to leave Venice, yet I lingered on, held by a foolish curiosity concerning the ultimate *dénoûment* of the little drama in which I had played a part. Then the fine weather ended suddenly; a grim wind churned up the waters of the lagoon, and the rain poured incessantly with an infernal kind of energy, blotting out the Giudecca and San Giorgio Maggiore like a curtain. For two days I shivered over proofs in my clammy room; on the third the rain was more energetic than ever, and I began to pack.

Late in the afternoon I was

sorting some sketches when there was a knock at my door. Without looking round, I shouted permission to enter, expecting that Marco and Todaro had arrived with my clean shirts and a new instalment of gossip. Much to my surprise, I heard my name uttered by an unfamiliar masculine voice, and when I turned I saw that my visitor was Lewis Arden.

He looked apologetic and a trifle sheepish. "I see you're packing," he said; "don't let me interrupt you. I've only come for a moment." I made him sit down and gave him a cigarette. Seen at close quarters, he was less saturnine than I had imagined; his chin was weak, and his expression was irritable rather than morose. At that particular moment he looked thoroughly worried, and had the air of a man who had been confronted suddenly by a problem of conduct which was new and terrible to him. But I felt instinctively that he was honest, though probably stupid and certainly bad tempered, and I revised instantly my theory that he was a gay deceiver.

We talked for a little while in the language of commonplace. Arden reviled the weather and announced that he was bored by Venice. I inquired if his business in that city was progressing: he looked at me curiously and hesitated for a moment before he answered that doing business in Venice was a slow game. Soon afterwards, whilst I was talking, I became aware that he had ceased to listen. He put his hands on his knees, thrust his elbows outward, bent towards me, and interrupted me in the middle of a sentence.

"I say," he said, "I've only just found out that Erica—Miss Fane—borrowed money from you before I came here."

He paused, looking tragic. I amended his phrase at once. "It wasn't a case of borrowing money," I said. "Miss Fane would have starved if I hadn't thrust money upon her." Arden shook his head lugubriously.

"No, she wouldn't," he said. "She could have sold the things that she bought in Paris."

"She had the best of reasons for not wishing to do that!" I cried cheerfully. He looked as if he thought this remark slightly vulgar. "It was idiotic," he murmured. Then he asked, "Have you any idea how much she owes you?"

"No," I said. "The value of a couple of dozen boiled eggs, I imagine. She lived on nothing else. If you really want to know you must ask Marietta." And I returned to my sketches. He propped his chin on his hands and watched me solemnly.

"I can't understand it," he said after a while. "She took your money, she must have known you more or less to be able to do that—and she never told me about you until to-day. Would you mind telling me if you knew each other quite well?"

I dropped the sketches that I was holding and stared at this remarkable young man. Was it possible that he imagined me to have been making love to Miss Fane? I smiled

blandly at him. "Oh yes," I said. "I took Miss Fane all over the place. She had no one to show her round and was missing priceless days. It was too bad of you not to come before, especially as I bored her and she had a very good reason for disliking me."

Arden did not display any symptoms of the relief of a jealous lover whose suspicions had been proved groundless. Indeed for a moment it seemed to me that he looked almost disappointed. Possibly he had come in thirsting for a scene. "What on earth was the reason?" he asked.

I shot it at him without circumlocution. "She knew that I thought you weren't ever coming to Venice," I said. "And I did. I apologise for misjudging you, but you must admit that I had some excuse."

I half expected him to hurl furniture at me and leave the room in a rage, but he remained calm, and looked at me with a kind of scientific interest.

"She was always certain that I would come," he said at length.

"Always," I echoed emphatically. "That didn't prevent her from being perfectly wretched when you kept on postponing your coming."

He sighed deeply again. "I suppose you thought me a fairly black kind of beast?" he asked.

"I'm a crabby old bachelor and know nothing of these affairs," I answered. "Of course, you had your reasons."

"Oh yes," said Arden, nodding solemnly. He rose and picked up his cap. "I must thank you for all that you did," he said. "It was awfully kind of you, and I'm afraid Miss Fane hasn't seemed very grateful. But she is, really; only —women *are* queer! I think she was nearly off her head with excitement. I suppose she told you what she did in Paris? I wouldn't believe it at first, it was so utterly unlike her." He looked more worried than ever, and flicked at the table with his cap. Suddenly a smile dawned in his face. "She brought those damned canaries," he said. "That's really her!"

It seemed to me that Mr Lewis Arden was not altogether remote from the crime of attempting to discuss the peculiarities of his *fiancée* with a stranger. He said no more, however, on that subject, but expressed a wish that he might meet me again. I informed him that although I had packed most of my belongings I should probably remain in Venice for two or three days longer. His face actually brightened. "Let's meet somewhere to-morrow," he said, "and go and see all the sights. I've done nothing but sit about. Will you be free about twelve?"

I replied affirmatively, and we arranged to meet in the Piazza. Then he went down to see Marietta, and I began to meditate on my impressions. They were more agreeable than I had expected. Arden was queer-tempered, I thought, slightly *gauche*, and not too clever; but he had a certain pleasant boyish directness, and his profane remark about the canaries was evidence that he

possessed a glimmering of humour. I felt fairly sure that he had lived almost entirely in the society of men, and was tremendously thankful to have found one in Venice; I was also fairly sure that he was tending to be bored by the poor Lordessa. Time alone would reveal whether he would be able to conquer the tendency: I had known several men who, after finding the hectic conditions of an engagement often unromantically fatiguing, had retrieved their happiness in the calmer atmosphere of married life. That he was not in love with her I was quite certain; but if he had ever been, there is a kind of love which, in spite of the poets, is capable of resurrection. I looked forward to meeting him again with considerable pleasure.

VI.

Next morning the sun shone; the bad weather had departed, leaving no trace but an exhilarating freshness in the air, and Venice gleamed like a fairy city of rose and pearl. I tried to work, but the sunshine and colour proved too alluring, and at eleven o'clock I was bobbing up and down in a gondola on the dancing water of the Canal della Giudecca. I disembarked at the Piazzetta, strolled about the great square for a while, and then passed the rainbow-hued portal of St Mark's. I can never weary of the beauty and mystery of that incomparable interior: if I haunted it for a hundred years I should, I know, always enter it with a thrill of wonder and leave it with a deep sense of peace; the gold of its mosaics, its purple pillars and the myriad marbles of its floor blend, at all hours of the day, into a single perfect harmony of colour, so that one seems, as one walks down nave or aisle, to be passing through the heart of some immense, hollow jewel.

I sat near the steps of the pulpit on the left of the choir, and had been gazing idly for five minutes at Sansovino's Evangelists and the great altar beyond them, when I felt a hand laid on my shoulder. I turned and saw that Lewis Arden was sitting immediately behind me. I had not expected to see him until an hour later, but I concluded that he, too, had been tempted by the sunshine, had played truant from his work, and was showing the splendours of St Mark to the inæsthetic Miss Fane. I looked round the church, but could see no sign of the lady; when I spoke to Arden he informed me that she had refused to accompany him. "She doesn't like churches in Italy because they belong to the Roman Catholics," he explained solemnly.

We strolled about the lovely building for some time, then, after pausing in the Atrium to look at the mosaics and the stone on which Barbarossa knelt, we passed into the Piazza. I asked Arden whether he had finished his work in

Venice, or whether, like myself, he had been unable to resist the beauty of the morning. He did not answer, and when I looked at him I realised that he was regarding me with a very odd expression. He had all the air of a schoolboy who had played truant and was thinking what fun it had been. I smiled at him.

"Come," I said; "confess that Miss Fane and the sunshine persuaded you to have a holiday. It's a perfect morning in a perfect city,—we'll make the most of it; we'll celebrate the occasion. I propose that we call for Miss Fane and whirl her off in a gondola to the Lido for lunch."

Arden did not, apparently, find my enthusiasm infectious. He made no comment on my suggestion, but continued to regard me in the same queer way. At length he spoke.

"What kind of work do you think I'm doing?" he demanded.

"Something connected with ships, I suppose," I replied. "I hope that they are real ships, and that you haven't come to plant more of those horrible steamboats on the canals. Miss Fane is so fond of steamboats that I have long suspected you of being interested in them."

My paltry effort to be archly humorous appeared neither to amuse nor irritate him. "It isn't connected with ships," he said, staring straight in front of him. A queer, reluctant smile crept over his face. "In fact," he added, "it isn't connected with anything."

"That is a hard saying," I remarked. We sat down outside Florian's; he drew his chair close to mine and stared at me fixedly.

"I'm going to tell you something," he said. "You may think me an awful cad, but I believe you'll understand. You've seen a lot of her."

"If you mean Miss Fane, I don't think we ought——" I began. He cut me short. "I'm not going to discuss her," he said. "I only want to tell you that it was all rot about my work. I haven't got any; I only pretended. Now what do you think of me?"

I begged him to explain. "Can't you see?" he cried. "Being with—with a woman all day bores me to death; being engaged is a pretty big strain anyhow, but being engaged when there isn't another soul in the place to talk to is absolutely killing. If I hadn't invented this story of work, and got a few hours to myself every day, I don't know what would have happened. I should have collapsed altogether, I think." And this remarkable lover made a dramatic gesture of despair. His eyes positively glowed with self-pity.

I controlled a strong impulse to laugh. "Why on earth do you tell me this?" I asked. He shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't know," he said; "I suppose because it's such a relief to tell any one anything, instead of everlastingly pretending, pretending. Oh Lord!" he cried fervently. "I'm sick to death of it!"

I was silent for at least a minute, during which interval

he attempted to eat the head of his cane. "Pretending!" I said at length. "Do you mean that you are pretending to be in love when you aren't?"

He nodded gloomily. "That's it," he said. "Isn't it a truly jolly situation?"

"But why do it?" I asked. "A great many marriages are based on mutual esteem and friendship, and other unpassionate and excellent virtues. Why don't you take that line? It's not romantic, but it's sensible, and twice as durable as the other. It seems to me that to begin a lifelong companionship under any kind of false pretence is highly dangerous."

He listened to my excellent platitudes with dumb patience. "That's all very fine," he said, "but unfortunately Erica wouldn't see it. Besides, there's another drawback. I'm cursed," —he said this with tremendous solemnity—"I'm cursed with a most enormous conscience. As I began, so I must go on. It's my duty. In fact, to tell you the truth, it's only a sense of duty that brought me here at all."

"I congratulate you," I said unkindly, "but you ought to have come sooner."

"Oh, if I had known she was short of money," he began. Then he leant towards me confidentially. "You think I'm a fickle brute," he said, "but I'm not, really. I've wanted to be, often, I admit; but in the end my horrible conscience stepped in and spoilt everything. I believe you'd understand if I told you the whole story. As soon as I saw you yesterday I felt that. You're a man."

"But I'm not impartial," I said. "You must remember that I was able to watch Miss Fane during the time when she was waiting for you. I assure you that it was not a cheerful occupation."

I regretted the words as soon as I had spoken them. They seemed to cause him genuine pain. "Poor Erica!" he said, "she can look most awfully depressed, can't she? But I often wonder if women who show it as much as that really feel as keenly as we do." He spoke very seriously, and contemplated the ground with gloomy eyes. "Of course she has had a rotten time," he continued, "but compared with what I've gone through in the last year it must have been heavenly. I believe," he added with some emotion,—"I believe that the worry of it all has knocked ten years off my life. My health has suffered frightfully."

This time I could not refrain from smiling. "I don't see that you have much to complain of," I said. "You're young, you have congenial work which brings you in a decent income, and a charming girl adores you. Most men would envy you heartily."

He rattled his stick against the leg of his chair. "What's the use of being adored by anyone unless one can adore her in return?" he demanded.

I began to lose patience. "Oh, it's absurd to keep on worrying over questions of that kind," I cried. "Get married. There's nothing to prevent you. You'll find that afterwards all your troubles were imaginary."

He laid his hand on my arm. "Listen," he said, "and I'll tell you the whole thing. I'll make it short, so don't interrupt. I met Erica at the Loanes'—Dick Loane was at school with me—and I was sorry for her because her mother had died and she hadn't a relation left in the world. She liked me very much; we used to have long talks, and she would tell me how wretched her life was, though the Loanes were quite kind in their you-belong-to-me-and-don't-you-forget-it sort of way. They were like that even to their friends; every one was a sort of satellite that revolved round their own particular constellation. Well, they were awfully keen that Dick should marry,—he'd been refused by half a dozen girls in spite of his money and a prospective baronetcy,—and though Lady Loane didn't really like Erica, she decided that for want of a better Erica would do for Dick. Dick was a decent sort of fellow to whom marriage meant carpet-slippers and kids, and he liked Erica; Erica disliked him, but had made up her mind to marry him, I think, if he asked her. When Lady Loane saw that she liked me better she was fearfully surly: that her governess should prefer some one else to her beloved boy seemed quite dreadful, and it was exactly what the other six girls had done. She watched Erica like a dragon, and kept her away from me as if I were a leper. I believe she told her awful legends about me; I know that she told them to a cousin of hers called Mrs Perivale. This made me mad. I began to imagine I was in love with Erica, and gazed at her with the eye of affection whenever Lady Loane was looking our way. The night before I left Lady Loane made Erica and Dick sing silly love duets. This irritated me awfully; she meant it to, of course, but she made a big mistake in doing it, for while she was out of the room hunting for more duets and Dick was talking to some one else, I walked off Erica into the garden—it was a ripping night—and cursed her for getting completely in the clutches of the old woman and for meaning to marry a man whom she didn't care for. I was in a very bad temper, and I suppose I really was jealous in a kind of way—anyhow, I was devilish eloquent. She began to cry, and said that no one in the world cared for her, and then I asked her if she was quite certain—and—well, after that I don't know exactly what happened; I know that I kissed her, and she clung to me, and that the air was full of the scent of roses, and all the rest of it. I suppose, if one heard the truth, one would find that most of the marriages in the world begin that way. I'd led a lonely sort of life, too, and I'd never been loved by a girl before—at least, not by a nice girl. I went mad. She became awfully happy at once, and actually laughed when they came shouting after us all over the garden,—beastly, that; the servants could all hear. When we were walk-

ing back to the house I began to realise that I'd been a bit of an ass, and when she said that she must wait till the morning to give me her answer, I felt cold shivers in my back. I hadn't, it seemed to me, asked any question; I'd certainly never dreamed of asking her to marry me; I didn't want to marry; I hadn't a penny then. Lady Loane was in a fine rage when we turned up; she was usually a decent old thing in her stuffy way, but that night she gave us a taste of her temper; she glared at me like a tigress, and told Erica in so many words that she had been behaving like a vulgar scullery-maid. Erica wept, and I went to the smoking-room and drank seas of whisky-and-soda, but the more I drank the more certain I became that I'd been a cad. I tossed about all night, and felt beastly in the morning. After breakfast Erica came up to me and said that she had thought it all over, that I was the only person in the world for her, and that she would marry me as soon as I liked.

"I ought to have told her the truth then; but I couldn't; she looked so happy. . . . I went away that afternoon; she wrote to me every day for the next fortnight, and of course I wrote to her. I felt worse and worse, and at last I got into a kind of frenzy and pointed out that I'd no money and no prospects; that I'd been a fool to think of marrying (that was a lie; I hadn't thought of it), and that it wasn't fair to her to ask her to wait for years. She merely replied that she would wait for ever, if necessary. After that I felt hopeless and just let things drift. When the Loanes came to London in the autumn I met Erica pretty often, and still hadn't the courage to tell her the truth. I thought that women had some instinct which told them when a man didn't really love them, but if they have, Erica didn't possess it. So the thing went on, and I got quite used to it, though I very soon discovered that we hadn't a single thing in common. That made no difference to her. Every now and then I would make an effort to prove to her that our engagement was a mistake; she would cry; there would be a furious scene, and then she would put everything down to my bad temper and forgive me.

"In the end I made up my mind to marry her, though to tie oneself down for life seemed a pretty big price to pay for a minute of lunacy. Very soon after I decided this, I was offered the appointment in Trieste,—a first-rate job, starting at £600 a-year with a steady increase. As soon as I got it a funny thing happened. I began really to dislike Erica. But she never saw that; something always prevented me from being unkind to her. When I was safely in Trieste she seemed to become quite unreal to me; I didn't dislike her any more, but she had simply ceased to exist. I remembered the nicer side of her, and felt quite friendly—friendly to her memory,—but it never seemed possible that we could be really intimate again.

Funny, wasn't it? But when she wrote to say that she was coming out I got into an awful panic, and wrote begging her not to. As soon as I had written I felt a cad and wrote another letter, which she assumed to contradict the first one. This went on for ages, and then she wrote to say that she had left the Loanes, and was coming out as soon as possible. I gave it up; Fate, or whatever you call it, seemed too strong for me, — I wrote and told her to meet me in Venice."

"Why in Venice?" I asked.

He looked doubtful. "I don't quite know," he said. "It seemed, somehow, to give me another chance. As soon as I had written I began actually to hate her. I felt as if I were in a cage. Then you know what happened. I left her to wait here; I told her that I was too busy to come. Lies, all lies! I was terrified, and I behaved like a cad. I see that you think so; my only excuse was the ghastly state of my nerves. Oh, yes! I've been a beast; I've lost all my self-respect; and all for nothing. The situation is worse now than it has ever been."

He ended with a groan. I leant forward and laid my hand on his arm. "Marry her," I said. "Take the risk. The chances are all in favour of your being happy. But you'll have to make an effort."

His bilious hue deepened; he looked at me with an almost dreadful glare.

"Yes, I suppose it's all up now," he said, and sank into gloomy silence. I sipped an iced drink and contemplated the façade of St Mark's. Of course, I thought, he had been a fool, yet throughout the affair his dark behaviour had been mitigated by a ray of decency: he had hated to hurt Miss Fane. It would have been quite easy for him to break off the engagement with violence; his mistake was that he had thought it possible to procrastinate honourably. My sympathies were chiefly with Erica, yet I had seen enough of her to realise that there was something to be said on Arden's side. At any rate, he had, vulgarly speaking, paid for his fun.

He remained sitting beside me with his elbows on his knees, and drummed his temples with his fists as he stared across the Piazza. Suddenly he uttered a kind of groan, sat up straight, and made a signal to someone who was approaching us. I looked up and recognised Erica Fane in her most radiant toilette. Arden rose; I glanced at his face and saw that it was grim beyond belief. He advanced to meet her, and they walked slowly away side by side.

VII.

I sat outside Florian's for an hour after they had disappeared from the Piazza, thinking over Arden's dismal revelations, skimming the Italian papers, and watching

the innumerable pigeons that hovered and strutted around the tall flagstaffs. One o'clock had sounded, and the Piazza was almost deserted, when I saw a female figure coming towards me at a great pace. It was Erica Fane; she was unattended and evidently in a hurry; to her tight skirt, I think, it was due that she had the aspect of a hobbled horse attempting to canter.

She came straight up to me, and as she drew near I realised with some amazement that she was quite unlike the Miss Fane whom I had formerly known. Her cheeks were flushed, her eyes were blazing, and her chin was protruded ferociously. She halted in front of me and surveyed me with a formidable stare. I saw then that she was in a furious temper.

"I want to speak to you!" she cried in shrill staccato. I rose and pointed to a chair, but she remained standing in front of me. "Lewis says," she continued, "that he has had a long talk with you, and that it has cleared his mind. I don't know what that means; but I know that you have been setting him against me, and I hate you, I hate you," she dropped her parasol and clenched her fists. For a moment I imagined that she was about to make a physical onslaught upon me. I begged her to be calm. She tossed her head so that the feathers in her enormous hat nodded like the plume of Hector, and repeated the word with scornful emphasis.

"Calm!" she cried. "Calm! I should think so, when you're trying your best to spoil my life! Ever since Lewis met you yesterday he has been different. Oh, it's low, it's mean! I dare you to tell me any time when I ever gave you the least reason for thinking—the least encouragement. You know very well I'm not that sort!"

"What on earth do you mean?" I cried.

"Oh! you know quite well," she snapped, "and that's the reason why you've been talking to Lewis. Men are all the same, and I hate them!"

I gasped, and yearned to laugh immoderately. The little fool had actually concluded that I was in love with her, and that jealousy had prompted me to drop poison into Arden's soul. This was too ridiculous, even from the Lordessa, and I resolved to give the idea a short shrift.

"My advice to Mr Arden," I said, "was that he should marry you as soon as possible."

She stamped melodramatically. "I don't believe it!" she cried. "You may have said so, but you said a lot of other things as well which were very different. He was never like that before; I thought at first that he had gone mad."

I began to realise what had happened. Evidently, Arden had cleared his mind (as he called the process) during his conversation with me, and after working himself up into an eloquent mood had made a desperate bid for liberty, and had really succeeded in shaking the Lordessa's confidence in him, whereupon she had

assumed at once that I had incited him to this course for reasons of my own. The assumption was quite preposterous: on the few occasions when I had spoken during my interview with Arden I had been entirely her advocate; but I perceived that I had made a vital mistake in allowing Arden to speak at all. I ought, I suppose, to have realised that the mere act of pouring out his whole story to another man would bring him face to face with the reality of the situation and excite him powerfully, so that he would no longer be content to drift, as he called it, but would begin to struggle once more. Yet, after all, could any one reasonably be expected to foresee such a contingency?

"I'm extremely sorry," I said, "if I have done anything to cause trouble between you and Mr Arden. I assure you it was absolutely unintentional."

The Lordessa bit her lip and looked at me with sullen eyes. "Oh, I dare say!" she said. "But you did it, all the same. He's changed; and I begin to think that I never really knew him. If he wants to get back my respect he'll have to take trouble." I stared at her blankly, for I had never dreamed that she was capable of any attitude towards Arden but one of adoration. He had evidently managed to shock her thoroughly. "I don't so much mind his turning against me," she went on; "he has done that before; he has a very queer temper. What I hate is that an outsider should have been able to make him do it. I feel just now as if I could never forgive that." Her face changed, and I saw tears at the corners of her eyes.

"I believe you're wrong," I said, not altogether truthfully; "he's in one of his black moods, that's all." She shook her head vehemently.

"No, I'm right," she asserted. "And you're at the bottom of it all. You may not have meant to be,—you *say* that,—but it's your fault. I hate you, and, whatever happens, I won't ever speak to you again."

Once more she reminded me of a canary,—a canary that was furious because it imagined that its lump of sugar was about to be taken away. I became slightly irritated; her shrillness was certainly provoking, and, after all, I had made some sacrifices. "I think you are too theatrical," I said.

"Think what you please," she retorted tartly, "your thoughts don't concern me. But don't you try to interfere——" she broke off suddenly and seemed to pant for breath. "Oh, don't you see?" she cried. "I love him, I love him!"

She stood motionless, with her hands clasped tightly, staring at me, and then I realised that in spite of her tawdry clothes, her ridiculous theories, and her shrill voice, she was superb. The elemental woman in her blazed forth; she was no longer a feather-headed little governess, but a passionate soul that cried for its mate, and writhed in agony because it feared to lose the

one thing that made life splendid. I confess without shame that I felt a deep envy of Arden; I realised that she would have suffered any torture for his sake, have gone, if there are hells, to any hell; and the thought of my own loveless, solitary life became suddenly hateful. What a thoroughly damned fool Arden was! Superficially she might be awkward and commonplace, but essentially she was finest gold. She had come through fire; for the first time she had doubted her lover, but her last cry told me that her love had trampled doubt to death and shone like a star.

I sat there in silence, feeling insignificant. She remained standing in front of me for about a minute, then she turned and walked slowly away. For once her clothes didn't seem absurd. If Arden could have witnessed our interview, I thought, even his self-absorbed soul might have been aroused.

I wandered restlessly through innumerable churches all the afternoon, and did not return to the Cà Loredan till nightfall. When I entered the door Marietta met me with the information that the English Signorina had packed her baggage and departed, canaries and all, no one knew where.

VIII.

That was the end of the episode. I saw her walking with Arden two or three times during the following week, then they disappeared from Venice. I heard nothing of their being married, and Mrs Perivale had no information. I left Italy with a strong sense of having played a small part in two acts of a drama, and of having been ruthlessly eliminated from the third. After some time I wrote to Arden at Trieste (Mrs Perivale knew the name of the shipping firm which employed him), but I received no answer. The third act remained a mysterious blank.

A year ago, and two years after the events in Venice, I was reading a paper in a café when I came upon the following paragraph:—

The Count and Countess Federowski, who have been on trial for political conspiracy, were yesterday sentenced at St Petersburg to twenty years' confinement in Siberia. They will be permitted to take their younger children with them into exile. Their English governess, Miss Erica Fane, has obtained leave to accompany them.

Poor Lordessa! I wonder if she remembers the Cà Loredan. I don't think, really, that I want to meet Lewis Arden again.

STALKING THE RED DEER OF OTAGO.

BY A. E. LEATHAM.

I DOUBT whether anything in the way of sport can surpass red deer stalking in the highlands of Otago. Gorgeous scenery! a climate so bracing that a man can walk from sunrise to sunset without feeling unduly tired; glorious trophies in the form of stags' horns far surpassing anything to be found in our own country! What more can the heart of hunter desire?

The district is a perfect paradise for deer, which have plenty of food both winter and summer, unlimited ranges of mountains and valleys to roam over, high grassy slopes to feed on in fine weather, and thick evergreen beech forests wherein to find shelter during bad weather.

The first deer were imported from Lord Dalhousie's forest in Scotland. Eight yearlings, turned down near Lake Hawea in 1868, have increased to many thousands, covering an area of some three thousand square miles. And whilst still keeping the beautiful wild and graceful heads of their ancestors, they have developed length and strength of horn far superior to those of any stags in Great Britain at the present day. On my deer-stalking trips I considered myself unlucky if I did not get at least three stags with horns over forty inches in length, and I am prepared to believe that in an exceptionally good season horns might be found to measure at least another ten inches. I noticed that the farther west I went, the better the heads were. My conviction is that the heads in the heavy forest near the west coast are equal to any of the forest heads of Central Europe.

I was the first Englishman to shoot in the Hunter River Valley. On my first visit to the country in 1902 the Secretary of the Acclimatisation Society at Dunedin told me that an Australian sportsman had found tracks of deer in the river-bed of the Hunter, though he had not actually seen any deer, so I settled to go there. Travelling to Pembroke by train and coach over the Crown Range, I drove on to Hawea Flat, and taking pack-horses there, reached the mouth of the Hunter in four days from Dunedin. Then gradually moving my camp up the river for thirty miles to Mount Macpherson, I explored all the Hunter Valley, and did so well that in the following season the valley was full of sportsmen. The proverb which deals with cooks and broth conveys a salutary warning to the big-game hunter, so I spent most of my time that year in the side valleys, and in that and three subsequent seasons explored every side valley up

Lake Hawea and the Hunter, some of which, owing to the difficulty of approaching them through the rocky gorges, no Englishman had ever entered. There are as many as twenty valleys on the west side, from ten to twelve miles in length, most of them holding deer; on the east side there are no deep valleys, but many corries and much nice ground for deer in summer, though there is a scarcity of bush, and consequently of feed for them in winter.

I was extremely fortunate in having a capital man, Donald by name, as gillie for my first two seasons. Always cheery and always encouraging, never down-hearted with any ill-success, very keen, a real fine Scotsman, a splendid walker, as strong as a horse, Donald had the rare gift of not considering that he knew better than any one else, and was ever ready to follow out any suggestion made.

Most of the bush on the lower part of the Hunter near the lake has been destroyed by burning, but in the upper reaches of the river and all the side valleys there is bush down to the river-beds. Large and evergreen beeches—birches they are called in New Zealand,—with pines and other hard-wood trees, flourish in the low ground, gradually giving place to the scrub that covers the hill-sides. Above the scrub again are grassy banks amongst rocks and rugged ridges, with occasional spacious green slopes, topped by frowning cliffs of grey granite, and on the highest tops snow-drifts and glaciers.

Some of the ravines are very precipitous and rugged, and the walking is very hard work in most of them. Besides the perils of stone-slides and rocks, the low scrubby bush which has been laid by the snow in winter on the very steep hill-sides has never properly re-asserted itself, and in its semi-recumbent form is very trying to both legs and temper.

The deer are easy to stalk, provided there are no precipices in the way, for on the one hand, owing to the rough nature of the ground, the stalker who pays due regard to the wind is nearly sure to get within shot, and on the other, the deer, having no enemies except man, and in many places never having heard the crack of a rifle, take little or no notice of noises such as those of falling stones, to which they are accustomed, and hardly condescend to look up.

One very pretty little valley, which has a lake at its head, I found very difficult to enter at the first attempt, but on two subsequent occasions I hit off a deer-trail, and got in comparatively easily. On the first occasion, intending to stay the night, we started from our camp in the main valley, taking a rück-sack which held a soldier's little canteen, meat, bread, plum-pudding, tea, sugar, and two sweaters to sleep in. We spent a thoroughly bad morning in trying to get through the bush and fern up a very steep gorge, where we were constantly thwarted

by a precipice. Donald at last found a place where we could just climb round a rock overhanging a cliff, but having come back on his tracks to tell me, he could not retrace his steps so as to hit off the right place again, with the result that we wandered up and down amongst the timber and rocks looking for it, and were on the point of giving up the search when I chanced to find it. By the aid of some projecting branches we got round a nasty bit of slippery rock, and down into the bed of the creek. Jumping from boulder to boulder, sometimes wading, often having to cross and recross the creek to avoid big rocks, and occasionally compelled to leave the stream and climb up a steep bank in the bush to avoid a precipice, we reached our goal at four o'clock after ten hours' wandering. There before us lay a beautiful mile of clear water, sheltered by bush down to its very edge on the south, with high rocks and a lovely cascade falling sheer into the water on the north, and at both ends several acres of long, sweet grass. We saw one large stag at the top end of the lake, and made him out to be a royal as he walked along the edge of the water browsing on small bushes. He had no hinds, but we could see that he was roaring, although we could not hear him. We then viewed a stag with four hinds on our side of the lake, walking away from us towards the head of the lake. Those we followed up, and while I was going through some high birch I heard the stag roar just outside the wood in front of me. Creeping along slowly, I presently saw two hinds lying down, and the top of the stag's head just visible above the grass. I got within a hundred yards, and then, conscious that the hinds had seen me, I sat still and waited for the stag to get up and show his body. I could see that he was a strong ten-pointer, and felt sure of getting him so soon as he rose. The hinds soon seemed satisfied, and after a while got up and began feeding. Last of all the stag stood up, and I noticed that he was very light-coloured and grey. When he dropped to the shot I gave behind the shoulder I found that he had a very strong horn, and that his teeth were gone, or mere rotten stumps. Donald cut off the head, and having collected some firewood, with a good fire in front and a rock which kept off the cold wind behind us, we spent a very fair night. I had dropped my cap in the thick bush in the morning, and had managed to make a capital nightcap out of the rück-sack, which was in reality nothing but a towel stitched up into the form of a rück-sack. Next morning we were up and off by daylight, and it took us eleven hours' hard work to get home. Having been struggling most of the time through low, scrubby bush, we were by no means sorry to find that our cook had got a good supper ready for us. The horns were 40¼ inches long, the girth between the brow and bay tines

was 8¼ inches, and between bay and tray antlers 6¾ inches, up to that time the record in girth for Otago.

On our return journey I carried down the rifle and rück-sack, and Donald carried the head,—a pretty good performance on his part, as to carry a stag's head through low, thick bush is most trying. It is impossible to carry the head over one's shoulders, with the deer's skull resting on the back of the bearer's neck, and the horns facing forward on each side of his head, in the usual way, because the horns are apt to catch perpetually in every twig and creeper. Moreover, on very steep ground the hands must be free to hold a stick. We had often to crawl under low scrub, while the heat of the blazing sun in a breathless sky was almost overpowering. Donald never even murmured, though in a later trip another guide in a much easier valley refused to try and carry a head out, declaring it impossible. I took it myself to show him his mistake, and carried both it and the rifle, while he walked sulkily behind empty-handed, thoroughly disgusted, and we will hope as thoroughly ashamed of himself.

There was one occasion, in 1903, which neither Donald nor I shall ever be likely to forget. We had spent a fruitless day in trying to get to some deer that we had spied in the morning up one of the side valleys by following the main ridge between that valley and the next. The going was so rocky and precipitous that after five hours' hard climbing we had to give it up and make our way down to the stream which was running far below us, there to camp out for the night. It was very late, so I went ahead of Donald to try and find the best way down, as he could not move at any pace on the steep hill-side, having lost his stick, which had fallen over a precipice in the morning. I thought that by keeping down a small narrow ridge, with steep rocks on each side, I could get to the stream safely enough, but when within two hundred yards of it we were suddenly checked by a precipice. It was getting dark, and too late to think of turning back and coming down another ridge. The mountain-side we were on stood at an angle perilously near 45° to the plain below, and it would have been quite impossible to lie down without rolling over the precipice, so the only mode of exit or descent that seemed possible lay in crawling along the side cliff, on which were some little tufts of grass and protruding cracks or ledges. My idea was that by groping along with my hands and feet for some ten yards, I could get to a small dry water-course leading down to the next ridge, and so on to the stream. I had great trouble in scaling the cliff, but once there, was getting along fairly well with my face to the cliff, feeling my way slowly along it, when suddenly both feet gave way, and I found myself dangling against the side of the precipice, hanging on

for dear life with both hands to tussocks of grass, and knowing that if anything gave way I was a gone coon. I had my stick, and never thought of letting it drop, though it was hampering me considerably, while I kept cautiously searching the face of the rock with my toes in quest of a foothold. Presently I touched a little ledge, and was able to put some weight on that toe, and so steady myself. With the other foot I then found another little protruding spot, and having got that foot firmly planted, was enabled to move along and get safely over the face of the cliff. It was an anxious time, and when I climbed down about twenty yards to the bottom of the cliff, and looked up to where I had crossed it, it looked simply awful. Then Donald, who had been a long way behind, came to the precipice, and I showed him the only possible way of getting down. I will own that I felt not a little anxious for the worthy fellow's safety, seeing he weighed fourteen stone and had my rifle, which was likely to hinder him, on his back. However, from below I was able to tell him where to put his feet, with the result that he got over safely, and climbed down to me. We reached the stream just as it was getting dark. We hurriedly collected all the sticks we could lay hands on—there was no good firewood, for we were too high up for timber,—the moon, which was rising behind the hills, helping us; but although we got a fair supply of dead brushwood, we had to be careful to make it last out the night. We were fairly comfortable, but sleep was out of the question, with a nipping cold breeze, no supper, and only a drink of icy cold water. Donald sat quiet for some time, then said—

"That was an awful place! I would not do that again for ten thousand pounds! If you had not done it first, I would never have thought of trying it."

"Anyhow, it's all right now," I said, "and all's well that ends well."

"If ever you come out again," said Donald, "you must get some one else as guide, for I canna stand things o' that sort."

When the full moon came over the mountain top—it was a beautifully bright night—all the huge rocks and peaks and precipices round us were lit up, and the deep shadows made them look more formidable and grander than ever. The rushing water fell over some rocks close by, and as at one and the same moment we listened to the booming of the waterfall below us and the roaring of a stag up the bed of the stream a little way above, it was impossible not to be impressed by the natural grandeur of our surroundings. These doubtless might have been appreciated better if we had only had a little venison to cook for supper and a cup of hot tea. But an empty stomach, a sharp frost with no blankets, and the prospects of no breakfast, with a whole day's tramp home before we could expect to get a bite of

anything, are material considerations apt to detract from the pleasure of bushing it on the loveliest evening imaginable. I kept constantly looking at my watch, and calculating how long it would be before daylight. It came at last, and soon after 6 A.M. we were up and away. A comparatively easy walk brought us down to camp by two o'clock. A cup or two of hot tea, with some bread and butter, soon put us right, and ready for a more solid meal at 5.30 P.M. This was one of my many failures, but the sportsman's occasional failures only make his successes much more enjoyable when they come.

One particular stag cost me three hard days' climbing before I got him. It was in 1907, when I made my fourth trip to the Hunter. I had spent the beginning of the season exploring a lovely country for deer, but they had not spread so far yet, and my partner, whom I had taken out that year and had sent to what I thought the best camp in a valley called "Boundary Valley," was not able to do the walking. When after three weeks he settled to give up the job, having had enough of it, I went straight to his camp. As it happened, I had told him of a high plateau of grass which he could reach and return from in a day, where there was sure to be a good head. Finding that he had not been there at all, I started quickly for the place, and saw a fine big stag; but the light was bad, and it came on to rain in torrents. The stag with his hinds retired to shelter in the bush, and I had to return without getting a shot, getting back to camp at eight o'clock, wet to the skin.

The next day I tried again, but the deer had not come out of the bush at all, as it was still raining, and blowing a hurricane. It continued to rain and snow alternately for a week on end, and I could not get on to the hills at all, as they were covered in cloud. Then at last, on April 27, came a fine bright morning, but the snow was deep on the hills, and having to go over a very high ridge to get down into the basin where the stag I wanted was likely to be, I thought it useless to try for him, On the following day, however, knowing that the big stags were just about to leave their hinds and retire for the season into the bush, I decided to make one more attempt. David, my guide, and I accordingly started at 6.30, taking the rück-sack and provision for sleeping out, and toiled slowly up through deep snow on the north side of the ridge, seeing nothing till we got to the top of the shoulder over which our road lay. As in places it was very slippery, David elected to take me over a narrow ridge where there was just room to walk, with deep rocks on each side. Though I had crossed the same ridge gaily enough at the first time of asking, on this occasion I had to sit down and scramble across like a crab, and I could not help remarking to David, "When it comes to this, I think it is time I stopped deer-stalk-

ing." There was much less snow on the south side. We got over the shoulder to hear almost immediately a roar and to spy an old stag with some hinds on the snow far below, just above the bush. It had taken us four and a-half hours from camp to reach the shoulder. The wind was very bad, blowing straight down from us to the deer, but they were too far off to get our wind yet. I thought it would be no use trying to stalk the stag from above, and we could not get below the deer without showing ourselves across a wide open space. However, we managed to cross below them, down a little gully of scrub with snow a foot deep, and although one hind saw us, the herd did not decamp. By climbing up a watercourse I got through the scrub between the deer and the high bush, and leaving David behind, stalked them from below. Although I heard the stag roar, I could no longer see him, and as several hinds were feeding within sight I dared not show my head much. I crept along in the deep snow, through the scrub, and raising my head over a tiny ridge saw the stag facing me, staring straight at me with his head and half his neck visible. Resting the rifle on my stick, I aimed at his neck, and he fell dead to my shot. He proved to be a very big stag, with a strong horn, although rather short, only 37 inches in length: he was a 14-pointer, with big, thick tops. The hinds, wholly undismayed by the sudden death of their lord and master, stood quite still for some time, and only strolled slowly off as we walked up. We had three hours' daylight to get home. By going straight down through the bush we hit upon the deer track at the bottom, and reached our camp before seven o'clock. I had twice before got good heads at this particular spot, but the heads vary very much according to the season. If the previous winter has been fairly open, and has been followed by an early spring, naturally the horns are better than after a very severe winter and late spring. No one has been able to weigh deer at their best (*i.e.*, just before the rutting season has begun), for the obvious reason that the stalking season does not commence till the middle of the rutting, but I am inclined to think that an average stag weighs 30 stone clean, or perhaps rather more. I weighed one on April 10th, which had been rutting three weeks, so had run down considerably in condition, and he weighed 370 lb. clean.

When I first went into the Hunter Valley I never saw more than three or four grown hinds with a stag, but the last time I went I saw several herds of twenty-five to thirty. No doubt some deer get killed by falling over precipices, and I have twice found dead deer at the bottom of rocks. I knew of a herd of one stag and six hinds and calves which went over a rock, and I think were all killed. I had seen a stag and some hinds on a grassy slope facing the Hunter river, about

a mile above my camp. The stag was not worth shooting, but I thought I would try and photograph the herd. I knew that over the other side of the slope it was very rocky, and as the deer saw me trying to get near them, and ran up to the ridge on the top of the slope where they were feeding, I thought that if I followed them up they would probably have to come down past me within a hundred yards or so. When I got near the top, and did not see any more of them, I naturally concluded they had got away down the other side.

But on reaching the rocky ridge I found their tracks going over it, and then some way below, through a narrow peep-hole past some projecting rocks, I saw a dead hind lying. The ground was frozen, and she must have slipped and gone over a precipice. In all probability the whole herd shared the same fate, since they had all gone the same way. I did not dare to follow them and make sure of the fact, but none of them came back again to feed on the slope where I had first seen them, and my impression is that they must have been killed.

The deer-stalking season lasts from April 1st to May 31st in the mountains of Otago, and the height of the rutting season is from March 20th to April 10th. After that date the big stags gradually roar less, and by the end of April have left the hinds and retired into the thick bush, though several small stags remain with each band of hinds. The stags' horns being all clean by the first week in March, which corresponds to September in Scotland, there is no particular reason why the stalking season should begin so late. For although the roaring, of course, helps the hunter to locate the stags, on the other hand camping out in March, when the climate is quite perfect in those glorious mountains, must be most enjoyable, and it would appeal to any good sportsman who understands the use of a telescope to have to locate his deer amongst the rough and high rocky corries where they are to be found in the warm sunny weather. Moreover, if the season extended from March 1st to the end of April, he would be sure of getting his full number of stags in April, if he had not got them before. May, which corresponds to November in Scotland, is a cold and stormy month, and not pleasant for camping out, even if the big stags were to be got, which is not the case, as they keep to the bush and do not show themselves at all, so that from a sporting point of view it is useless to camp out later than the end of April. Also gillies, cooks, owners of pack-horses, and other natives who under the present conditions only profit by the sportsman's money—a welcome addition to rather precarious earnings—for three or at the most four weeks, would gladly welcome the extension of the season.

The Britisher *must* take out one licence to shoot four stags before he begins shooting,

which costs £3; and then *may* take out a second licence, costing £5, entitling him to shoot four more stags. No one wants to bring away more than eight good heads in one season, although deer are getting so numerous now that sport would be materially improved if some philanthropic hunters devoted a season to the killing off of stags with small and poor heads. Of these there are too many, especially in the region where the deer were originally turned down. I have consulted several old deer-stalkers in Scotland as to the cause of there being so many deformed horns in the neighbourhood where the deer were turned out, and the unanimous opinion is that this is not caused by in-and-in breeding, but by some kind of accident, either in the form of falls in the very rough rugged ground when the stags are young, or, *horresco referens*, of wounds inflicted in former years by bad shooting. Although I have not seen them myself, not having been in that particular district, I have been told that there are many single-horned stags. This is certainly suggestive of bygone wounds, but the only way of verifying the fact lies in skinning each stag after it is shot. For an old wound always shows in the skin. No doubt some beginners, or otherwise poor sportsmen, are fond of trying long shots, when owing to their ignorance in the art of stalking they are not able to get near the stags. They little think what damage they may do by *wounding*. In fact, I have heard of one guide who has actually bragged of killing many stags at 600 or 700 yards, and I have little doubt that he and men like him are the real cause of so many malformed heads being seen.

Deer in Otago do not wander nearly so much as they do in Scotland. I have recognised the same stag with a band of hinds for three successive years at the head of one of the side valleys, and I am sure that the deer stick very much to their own localities, although of course young stags roam in the rutting season. For this reason the deer do not spread rapidly, and I found many lovely valleys for deer with no deer in them. The walking is hard, as the hillsides are so steep that it is not possible to get pack-horses up them, with the result that the camps have generally to be pitched on the flat river-beds, and every morning the hunter has to climb up 3000 feet in order to reach the grassy slopes where the deer are to be found in fine weather. But the climate is so bracing that the work which in England or Scotland would seem terrific is comparatively easy.

Some valleys have had tracks cut into them, which of course makes them very accessible, with the result that they are too much shot, and the sportsman must make up his mind that the more difficult a place is to get to, the more chance he has of getting good heads. Although no doubt there are still some good stags in places

much frequented by hunters, they know how to take care of themselves by not leaving the bush in the daytime.

The favourite tree for deer to clean their horns on is the celery pine, called "Tanika" in Maori; and by noticing where the celery pines were most rubbed, I came to the conclusion that the favourite place for stags to spend the warm days of February in the shade was nearly at the top of the timber line.

There are two troublesome things in camp. *Imprimis*, the blue-bottle flies, or blow-flies, which blow their eggs on one's blankets, or anything woollen. At night sometimes the camper-out is compelled to use lanterns, for the blue-bottles keep flying into an open candle, extinguishing the light. Then again there is a little sand-fly, in shape like a minute bee, which bites so viciously as to render a camp pitched anywhere near water untenable in the daytime.

Let me say in conclusion that the pleasures of deer-stalking in New Zealand are not sufficiently appreciated by British sportsmen. Furthermore, I feel sure that when the New Zealand Government realises the benefit it would be to the Colony to attract many more British stalkers, most of whom are men of means, the latter will be encouraged in every possible way, especially in that of fixing the deer-stalking season a month earlier.

FROM SEPOY TO SUBAHDAR.

In 1873 there appeared, from the hands of a local printer at Lahore, a book of the above name, being the translation of an autobiography in the vernacular of one Seetaram, a pensioned *subahdar* in the service of the Honourable East India Company. To be a *subahdar*, let alone a pensioned *subahdar*, in that service, was to have attained close on three-score years and ten, as you may tell from the tally of ages on the memorial over the long trench graves at Chillianwallah; and the period of Seetaram's active service was close on half a century. He rested from his labours soon after the Great Mutiny, in loyalty and honour, and he joined the army before the Nepal and Maratha-*cum*-Pindari wars. That is to say, his services covered the period of all the great Indian campaigns of the English except those of General Lake and Sir Arthur Wellesley.

His autobiography would therefore be a storehouse of sidelights from, to some extent, beneath the harrow, as Colonel Norgate of the Bengal Staff Corps, who was the original translator, recognised, and wrote a preface to the edition of 1873 — though it would appear that an earlier translation of some kind was made, as it is referred to in a 'Times' of 1863. Colonel Norgate himself received it from the author in 1861. A reprint was made in 1880, also by a local firm in Lahore. It attracted Lord Kitchener's attention a few years ago, as full of useful lessons which still held good for those who would see below the surface, and who have to deal with the Indian soldier of to-day. It has just been republished in Calcutta, edited by Lieut.-Colonel Phillot of the Board of Examiners, and also translated into Urdu (it originally was written in Hindi) under his supervision. It has also been made part of the official text-books for the examination in Urdu by the Higher Standard. The wisdom that it contains will not, therefore, be lost on the rising generation, while its very allusions should stimulate interest in the history of the British in India in the eventful first half of the nineteenth century.

The fascination which first moved Colonel Norgate to translate the book does not fade as time rolls on; and its simple reflections and ingenuous deductions, as well as the sidelights that it throws on events of which we now only read in official histories, have a peculiar charm. In sending his work to the first translator, Colonel Norgate, Seetaram says that he has received seven wounds and six war medals; and if half of what he tells be true, he certainly deserved these latter.

Seetaram, a Brahmin of

Oude of a fighting clan, was born near the one-time Rajput centre of Adjudya, the son of Ganga-ram Pandy. Men of the Pandy clan served largely in the old army of the Bengal Line; and it will be remembered how Mangal Pandy, the first mutineer, was responsible for the bestowal of the generic name of "Pandy" on the mutineers. When seventeen years of age, after a careful and orthodox upbringing in the house of the family priest, the young Brahmin's love of adventure was stirred by the return from the wars of his maternal uncle, a *jemadar* in a line battalion of the Company. The lad at once caught the scarlet fever badly, and longed, to the horror of his mother and the family priest, to shoulder a pike also. The father having a pending lawsuit, and mindful of the interest at the court of Oude which service with the British conferred, rather encouraged the boy's martial ardour, and a few months saw him returning with his uncle to his cantonment at Agra. Seetaram had never seen a *sahib*, and had the wildest ideas concerning them. His first introduction to one was seeing the adjutant measuring recruits in the verandah of his bungalow, and his surprise at hearing the adjutant address his uncle in the vernacular was great. His next adventure is the interview with the small red-faced old man with the eye of a hawk, who he finds is the colonel of a thousand men. In every case he is struck with the consideration with which his uncle the *jemadar* is received. In a parenthesis he here bewails the fact that the new *sahibs* are not like the old *sahibs*, and can't talk the language as well as they could. It is always the same story in the East, the same now as a hundred years ago, when Seetaram took the shilling—the new *sahibs* are not like the old *sahibs*. You hear the same in the clubs,—the new soldier is not like the old soldier—the new rank and file are not like the old rank and file,—and yet every one knows that for activity and physique the old regiments were not in it with the new ones. We need not follow the young Brahmin through his recruit stages, save to note the delight with which he left the recruit squad to don his red coat,—boys are much like another whether the skin be white or brown; but it is interesting to note that then as now, and then as ever, some *sahib* stood out in the regiment as a wonder and a power and a demigod. In Seetaram's regiment this wonderful Englishman was "Burampeel" *Sahib* (he cannot be traced, but it may have been Bloomfield), and he at once became an object of intense veneration to the lad, and remained so all his life. These wonderful Burampeel *Sahibs* are the men who enable the English to lead alien races to victory, from the banks of the Nile to the Great Wall of China, from burning desert to perpetual snow, come rain come shine, and the secret is the gift of the gods. It is

to be noticed that when a corps wants to mutiny, it is the first business of the instigators to get rid of the Burampeels, lest their influence counteracts the poison.

That, however, is a story that comes much later, and we may notice that the rest of Seetaram's *sahibs* appeared to him very ordinary *sahibs*, who had nicknames in the ranks, such as the *Oont Sahib* (camel), the *Nawab Sahib*, the *Damn Sahib*, &c., but no one ever dared give Burampeel *Sahib* a nickname.

Here Seetaram has a reflection to make. Since the Mutiny the *Lalcoatee* (red coat —viz., Queen's Army) officers do not treat the Indian soldiers in the way they used, which he admits is small wonder. Even when he was one of the force that relieved Lucknow, he was a "d—d black pig," and recalls how when he made chappaties in Cabul for officers of the 13th and 41st Foot, it was "Jack Sepoy was a d—d good fellow." Seetaram says he was always on good terms with the European soldiers, who used to treat them well, and why wouldn't they, for "did we not do all their hard work? We took their guards in the heat, we stood sentry over their rum casks. But the new soldiers from Europe are not so fine as the old ones." And he has heard that the Russ cannon killed all the big ones. "In the old days the 17th Foot called us brothers, the 16th Lancers never walked near our *chulas* (cooking-places)." The old man's recollections of the Nepal or Ghurka war are merely those of the young private in the ranks—his chief memories being of the repulse at the hill-fort of Nala-pani, where forty-eight men of his own corps were killed and two whole companies of white soldiers, whose comrades, he remarks, were nothing daunted, and came on again "like young cooks." Burampeel *Sahib*, to the great grief of the regiment, had an arrow through the chest and had to be invalided to England. After the final successful campaign of a rather disastrous war, we find the following reflection: "The English respect brave men and do not kill them. Is not this curious, for is not a brave man the most dangerous enemy? . . . The wounded snake can kill as long as life remains. If your enemy is not worth killing he is not worth fighting with." And thus the philosophy of the East, and as a recent Indian historian of the Mutiny has put it, when talking of the massacres of the women and children, "Would I kill a serpent and leave the eggs?" Which, after all, is simple human nature, without the shadow of the Prince of Peace.

Of all the curses under which the peasantry and traders of Hindustan groaned, and from which the British saved them, though now they would forget it, that of the Pindaris was perhaps the worst. The break-up of the Mogul armies had given rise to a race of free-lances, buccaneers, and masterless men, who had formed themselves

into bands under various leaders, and lived at their ease on the countryside. They raided with merciless and fiendish cruelty for hundreds of miles round the fortified places of refuge that they had made for themselves on the banks of the Nerbudda and in the more inaccessible parts of Central India. At last, in 1816, the Company and its allies could stand it no longer, and the Marquess of Hastings collected a large army at various points surrounding the Pindari districts, with a view to exterminating the nest once and for all. It is not necessary to deal here with the intrigues and cabals that brought several of the Maratha Chiefs into the field against us instead of assisting us to the good government and welfare of their own and neighbouring lands. Suffice it to say that the Pindari war developed into a Maratha war, and to the war marched Seetaram, a young though fully trained sepoy of the Honourable Company's Bengal Line. Wounded and left in the jungle in one of the lesser skirmishes, he was rescued by villagers. Returning by a good chance to his regiment, after thirteen days' absence, with a bullet in his back, he succeeded, he relates, in winning for the first time the approbation of his adjutant by not losing his musket and ammunition, — an interesting light on the fact that the way to an adjutant's heart has always been the same. Seetaram tells us also the old story, that the Pindaris always had better information than the British. However secret the British movements, they always seemed known to the enemy,—an ancient problem. Our army generally met the enemy when the spies reported none near for twenty *coss*. Oh, memory of the good De Wet and Rechter Hertzogg! The countryside sympathised with the Pindari for all their loot and cruelty, because, says Seetaram, give them a horse, and all would have looted on their own account. Seetaram talks of the cholera as a new disease, unknown to the English and to the natives. When the war was over Seetaram returned on furlough, to frighten his mother, who thought him a ghost. A telling of travellers' and soldiers' tales to his gaping fellow-villagers was a famous amusement to Seetaram, the furlough man, till he mentioned his rescue by villagers and the girl who had given him water. But he had reckoned without the village Brahmin, who at once reviled him as unclean, and excommunicated him, till fines and a Brahmin's feast at his expense had wiped out the stain. Seetaram remarks, "Five years' savings were thus expended, but who can combat destiny!" Sick furlough over, Seetaram rejoins, to find his beloved Burampeel Sahib back from Europe. He remarks, "I have never seen more than two *sahibs* like Burampeel *Sahib*," and they were *asal Belaitee* (real English), not *sahibs* from the hilly island." The allusion here is not a clear one: possibly the

Scotch or Irish who so largely held the Company's commissions did not meet with the old man's approval. The war was still in progress, and Seetaram relates the rescue from an Arab, in the act of killing, a young girl, daughter of a Thakoor in Bundelcund, whom the Arab had carried off. Burampeel *Sahib*, when appealed to, had the girl taken care of on behalf of the sepoy, but the adjutant of the regiment proposed to buy her from Seetaram for four hundred rupees. Seetaram was much enamoured of her beauty, and Burampeel *Sahib* explained the case to the colonel, when she was allowed to accompany the regiment as the lad's wife. It is such a story as that of the famed Juanita, the Spanish girl, rescued in the sack of a town by young Harry Smith, whose wife and constant companion she became. In storming a fort the whole of Seetaram's company were blown up, his uncle killed, and he himself badly injured. The hospitals were so full that the sahibs gave up their tents for the wounded. Seetaram marvels at the mad mercy of the Sirkar in not hanging the governor of the fort. The British view, that the man had been faithful to his own master, did not appeal to him, though now and again he recognises that there is magnanimity in such acts, even if foolish in their conception. Indeed, he is always at pains to bring out the acts of the British that he recognises as just and worthy, even when he cannot himself admire the ethics that inspired them.

After the Pindari war Seetaram is offered promotion in a new battalion that was being raised in Futteghur—one of those many new battalions that the constant extension of the British dominion rendered necessary, and which, unbalanced by any corresponding increase in the European garrison, finally resulted in that top-heavy Bengal army which blew up in the cataclysm of '57. Major "Gardeen," the new C.O., is described as an eccentric character, who came on parade in shooting dress, and threw his heavy stick at the heads of stupid recruits. Seetaram grieves at parting from Burampeel *Sahib*, saying again that "Only one Burampeel *Sahib* ever came from *Belait*."

With the new battalion, then come to some six years of age, Seetaram had marched with Combermere *Sahib* to the ever-memorable capture of Bhurtpur, which had so successfully defied the repeated assaults of Lord Lake and his large army. His company was amongst the stormers of the big bastion after the mine had been exploded, and the final exaltation that accrued to the Company at the capture of the impregnable place was viewed and duly noted on by this corporal of sepoys. Seetaram now became pay havildar, but lost that post through the prevailing custom of lending money to the British officers. He had lent Rs. 500 of the men's money to his captain, who could not repay when the

pay havildar was called on unexpectedly to produce it.

He gives an instance of the curbing of the powers of commanding officers and the interference by higher authority, which was so happily done away with at the time of the post-Mutiny reconstruction. A havildar was tried for gross insolence to a superior officer and dismissed the service. He journeyed to Simla, threw himself at the feet of the *Lat Sahib's* lady, and was reinstated, or at least that is how the transaction was viewed by the simple Seetaram. The loss of power of the regimental officers, due to many pernicious and unnecessary causes, has often been noted as one of the minor concomitant causes of the Mutiny; it is interesting to see that Seetaram held the same views. Seetaram complains of the want of show and dress of the *sahibs* as failing to impress the oriental mind. Only *memsahibs*, he says, appear at nautches as princesses should look. He had asked his officers why they too did not appear as princes and rulers: one had told him that it was considered a shame to wear jewels that had not been conferred as an honour; another *sahib* had told him that his *memsahib* wanted to wear so many jewels that he himself could not afford to do so! Seetaram appeals for continuity in officers. "Among us is a great dislike of new ways; . . . it takes us a long time to learn the ways of a *sahib*, and when the men are accustomed to him, it is not good to have him removed." The cry is as true to-day as when Seetaram handled the Company's musket. At this stage of his memoirs the old *subahdar* tells us what he thinks of the new post-Mutiny army and their discontents,—all wise talk, and by no means all out of date. The following is not without its modern application: "The practice of the Sirkar of keeping several regiments of native troops together at the same station is not wise. It is then that the young men get *musth* (above themselves) and swagger about in the bazaars, puffed up with vain conceits, and talk of things they had better not. They forget the giver of their salt."

The next great event of history in which Seetaram took part was the expedition to Cabul, to put the exiled King Shah Soojah of the Suddozai tribe of the Douranni nation once again on the throne of his fathers, so that a British puppet should keep the shadow of the bear off the sunlit empire of Hindustan. Seetaram was offered promotion into a new regiment of the Shah's Contingent, as the force was called that was being raised on his behalf. So to Cabul, *viâ* Candahar and the Bolan Pass, marched Seetaram with the Contingent, for his third great war. His account of the march to Cabul contains nothing new, nor is it necessary to follow the vicissitudes of the first phase of the campaign which, after the storming of Ghuzni, terminated with

the restoration of the Shah and the establishment of a British cantonment in Cabul. Here Seetaram makes mention of one of the well-known causes of the Afghan hatred of our occupation—viz., the partiality of Afghan ladies of rank for the British officers; and he refers to it at some length. Present with his regiment at all the vicissitudes which overtook the unfortunate garrison, he marched with them to their undoing in the Khurd Cabul Pass, and being wounded with a musket-ball, was taken prisoner, carried back to Cabul, and in common with many of the high-caste sepoys of Hindustan, sold as a slave in the market-place, only fortunate that frost-bite had not removed a limb. Rs. 240 was the price the powerful young Brahmin fetched in the market-place, where, he relates, several Europeans were also placed on sale, but whom some skins of Shiraz wine had apparently reconciled to their situation. One *sahib* he saw among the prisoners who cheered him by telling of the great army the Sirkar would undoubtedly send. Oosman Beg, his new master, treated him well, and had him taught Persian, threatening only terrible penalties in the event of an attempt to escape. The advance of the Avenging Army, however, left Seetaram, as it did many of his comrades, still a slave, and he had the mortification of hearing that the English, after burning the bazaar at Cabul, had left Afghanistan for good and all. To his own unaided efforts he must owe his release, and at last a camel-droving Powindah promised to see him through to British territory in return for a signed promise for a payment of Rs. 500. In October 1843 Seetaram arrived at Ferozepur by way of the Gomal Pass and Dera Ismael Khan, to find himself forgotten of the world and at great difficulty of finding even food. The brigade major at Ferozepur refused to believe his story, or to help in the matter of the ransom. Before the magistrate he claimed release, since his camel-driver swore he was his slave, but got no help. Then to the Commissioner went the exile, and found the *Subahdar* on guard to be an old comrade, who at first received his story with some incredulity. By the help of the *Subahdar* and the Commissioner the money was paid, and Seetaram found himself free, but penniless and dressed in his Afghan rags. Hurrying to the lines of a native regiment, to his horror, instead of sympathy, he was spurned as unclean and defiled, and even accused of having accepted Islam. The brigade major by now was convinced of the truth of Seetaram's story, and took him to the brigadier. This officer was more than kind, took him in, gave him money, and arranged for him to be reinstated in his old regiment. This he now joined, was well received by his old colonel, and posted to it as a havildar. In the regiment, however, he was an outcast among his fellow Poorbeahs, and could only associate

with the Christian drummers and the Muhammadans. During a visit to his home he was readmitted into caste, and his father helped to pay his ransom debt. His son had enlisted into the Bengal army and was away in Sinde. His first wife was dead, and the beautiful Thakhorin whom he had rescued from the Arab and married as a second wife had gone away, it was said, to try to find her old home. Going in search of her to Bundelcund, he found her living with her brother, and she rejoined him. Through his colonel's help, Government finally paid him the amount of ransom, but refused any back pay, unless he could find some one to certify to his record while with the Shah's Contingent. So all Seetaram's wars and years of service had but brought him to the position of a havildar.

He now tells us of the gossip and talk in his regiment at the failing prestige of the British, so diminished by the Cabul disasters, and how his colonel, to whom he repeated what he had heard, refused to hear more, but said he had a jealousy of the regiment. Seetaram mentions the advent of emissaries of the King of Delhi into the lines (the regiment was at Delhi). The sepoy regiments between Delhi and Ferozepur were, according to Seetaram, full of mutiny and discontent. The Sikh invasion of the Sutlej, however, diverted the public attention and the sepoys' minds. Seetaram with his regiment now took part in the terrible battle of Ferozeshuhr, and describes it as quite different from anything previously experienced, and talks of the famous charge of the 3rd Light Dragoons (still more famous at the previous battle of Moodkee) having changed the fate of the day. He mentions an item of that terrible night bivouac on the field of Ferozeshuhr, under the muzzles of the guns of the as yet unconquered Sikh batteries. An officer, not tipsy, but under the need of mental stimulant or sedative, walked up and down all night singing, and would not desist. At Sobraon Seetaram witnessed the destruction of the Sikhs at the broken bridge, and was himself knocked senseless by a sepoy's musket driven against him as its owner was struck down by a round-shot. He relates how close to the bridge-head he saw a European soldier about to bayonet a wounded Sikh, who begged for mercy and called out in English, whereon the European kicked him several times and then bayoneted him. A deserter in the enemy's ranks was no rare thing in India, there being the famous instance of the artillery sergeant who deserted to the enemy at the second siege of Bhurtpur, and directed the cannon that fired on the Commander-in-Chief's tent. Now and again half-misty stories come through of similar occurrences in the Mutiny, and Sir Henry Norman even mentions a European woman being hung at Meerut for her share in the outbreak there. After the occupation of

Lahore Seetaram tells us that the Sirkar's *ikhbal* (prestige and fortune) stood very high, and all the talk and discontent that he speaks of earlier had passed away for the time. The luck of the Company *Bahadur* was in every one's mouth, for nothing succeeds like success. After this campaign Seetaram with thirty-five years' service attained the rank of *jemadar*, and though with four medals to show for it, had little of the wealth that he had looked for when as a young man he had left his village in Oude to shoulder the Company's musket.

But the faithful Seetaram had not yet done with wars, in spite of his thirty-five years' service. The outbreak of the Second Sikh War took his regiment into the thick of the soldier's battle at Chillianwallah. In his account is one of those small points which constantly occur in the narrative, and do so much to establish the credibility of the statements which rest on it as their only authority. A new colonel had joined the regiment that day, and during the struggle through the thick scrub stopped the regiment from firing on a red-coated corps in their front, saying they were our own men. The officers, says Seetaram, kept telling him it was a Sikh corps, because they could see the black cross-belts, while those of the sepoy corps were white. Now the well-known coloured prints of the war always show the Sikhs in scarlet coatees and shell jackets with black belts. Seetaram says that the colonel was still afraid, and galloped up to the doubtful corps, which fired a volley in his face, whereon, unscathed, he galloped back, shouting, "All right! Fire away sepoy *log*." Seetaram tells us that the sepoys were not half so afraid of the Sikhs as in the campaign against them two years ago, and went at them much more readily. No doubt the Sikhs too had lost their best corps in the Sutlej after Sobraon. During the long wait after the battle, when the two forces watched each other, the sepoys and the Sikhs used to meet and talk while bathing in the Jhelum, which ran close to both camps. The men of the European cavalry regiments would occasionally sally out and have unauthorised single combats with Sikh horsemen. Seetaram says he used to be much struck with the different behaviour of the British and Indian wounded. The former would lie still and shake their fists, cursing the enemy; while the latter would dance around, hugging the wounded limb, calling out, "*Dohai, Dohai, Company Bahadur!*" (Have pity, Great Company). At the "crowning mercy" of Gujerat, Seetaram's regiment was on baggage guard. So *Jemadar* Seetaram, after his thirty-five years of service, escaped with his life from his fifth great campaign. Young he was in years, however, compared with many of the senior native officers of the Company's Bengal Army, where seniority alone counted for promotion. On the pillar

over the long trench graves at Chillianwallah already referred to, it is recorded that a *subahdar* of seventy and a *jemadar* of sixty-five were among the killed.

One great trial was still to be demanded of him, that of the Great Fear, when that famous army dissolved in a whirl of madness and mutiny; but before even this there was to be one more campaign, this time a minor one. In 1856 the Sonthal rebellion broke out —a rising of aboriginal hill and jungle tribes against the evils of direct administration and oppressive subordinates; and to the Sonthal hills and jungle marched Seetaram. The old man found the war a little incomprehensible: at one part of the country we were firing on them, at another feeding them with cart-loads of corn.

Seetaram now comes to the period immediately preceding the Mutiny, and the talk after the annexation of Oude. In April 1857, he says, he again told the colonel what he knew of what was going on,—the talk of the greased cartridge, the excitement among the men, the come and go of the emissaries of the King of Oude and the old Mogul Emperor at Delhi, and the discontent among the troops serving in the Punjab and Sind for the loss of their batta. Away at his home came the news of the outbreak at Meerut, and then gradually news of its spreading. Seetaram, from his well-known sympathy with the English, came in for suspicion and ill-treatment. A party of sepoys passing through his village carried him a prisoner to Lucknow, and here he relates that though there were two *subahdars*, a sepoy had command of the party—the assertion of the will of the strong men, as it were, over the mere seniority-derived rank of the native officers. Before they got to Lucknow they were attacked by some *sahibs* acting as troopers, and Seetaram, who, luckily for him, was in chains, was rescued from the mutineers, and appointed also a trooper among these European volunteer cavalrymen. After some service as such, he was, through the good offices of the commanding officer of this cavalry troop, made an extra *jemadar* in a Punjabi regiment. Never, says Seetaram, did he see the sepoys put up a good fight against the British, though he adds that it seems to have been different at Delhi.

Here comes the crowning tragedy of the old man's life. In one of the enclosures round Lucknow many mutineers had been captured. Seetaram's regiment was on duty, as carrying out executions, and Seetaram himself was in command of the firing-party. He was asking the names of the condemned men, when one gave the number of the regiment of the son that he had not seen for many years. The old man asked after his son, Anunteeram, of the Light Company. The wretched man said, "I am Anunteeram, from Tillowee, the son of Seetaram Jemadar." He fell at his father's feet, and the

father rushed to the major to ask to be relieved of command of the firing-party. The officer refused at first, but when he heard that it was the man's own son that he was called on to execute, he sent for the prisoner to question him, and relieved the father of the duty. The old man never thought even of begging for the lad's life—that was too doubly forfeit; and he went to his tent amid the jeers of the Sikhs of the corps. He was allowed to perform the last rites over his son's body, the only corpse to which such was permitted. Seetaram relates that the major was much blamed by his brother officers for allowing even this kindness to a mutineer's father, for feelings were running more than high, and the war was *à l'outrance*, since there is nothing so bitter as authority flouted, especially with all the concomitants of that terrible rising.

At the end of the campaign in the Terai, Seetaram at sixty-five years of age is promoted *subahdar*, and here we come across the first subject for complaint in all that patient life. Too old to double and do light infantry drill, he complains that he was shouted at by the adjutant, and the commanding officer called every sort of name, and forcibly invalided him from the service, as unfit for more work. It was no doubt high time, but possibly in the weariness of the reconstruction, and the rebuilding of a new army on the amazing ashes of the old, Seetaram did not get the consideration that his age and services merited.

The old man then moralises on the heart-breaking system of the Company, when men came to rank at an age when they were past justifying it, and speaks to the way in which the irregular corps, when the officers arrived at the rank of *subahdar* while in their prime, kept their men in order; but he laments the end of the Company's rule, and thought its successor far more harsh and uncompromising. Seetaram mourns, too, the new type of officer, out of sympathy with the men, but that was a transition stage, and has long ago changed for the better. But it is an old, old cry, that the new *sahibs* are not like the old *sahibs!*

Seetaram concludes the quaint and natural description of his life with some few remarks on the causes of the Mutiny, confirming those generally accepted, and with some reviling of the Mussulmans of India as the instigators of all trouble and the ruin of all moral codes and worth since their arrival in India. He then concludes with an acknowledgment of the peace and position his pension has conferred on him at the end of a long and hard life, and with an appeal to the officer at whose request he had written his memoirs, never to forget that he had always been wholeheartedly devoted to the British cause. It is all refreshing reading, partly because of naïve criticism, partly because of his recognition of

the good intention of the Sirkar, be it never so unintelligible. It is perhaps most pleasing for its evidence of the obvious enthusiasm that the British officers of the best type had inspired in this man of ancient warrior race. It throws light on the simple character in many ways of the old Bengal sepoy and his successors, who in patience and courage have carried the eagles, come rain come shine, from the Mediterranean to the Great Wall of China, and from the deserts of Egypt to the snows of the Hindu Kush and the swamps of Burma. It enables us to get a glimpse of that devotion which the British officer has been able to attract, and which has something more at its fount than the mark on an attestation paper. It also enables us to see where half a century ago the shoe was pinching, and where to this day it is apt to pinch again. The book is full of information for the sepoy officer to-day, and it is because Lord Kitchener listened to those who brought it to his notice that it now forms a text-book for the compulsory language tests in Hindustani that officers of the Indian Army must pass. It is good reading, in that it carries the reader through half a century of Indian history, and the vicissitudes that a soldier of the great British Empire, white, black, or brown, is ever liable to undergo, and the chances that are so well summed up in the old chant of the sepoy, *Khubbi sukh, Khubbi dukh, Angrez ka naukar*, which may be interpreted—

"Sometimes pleasure, sometimes pain,
The servant of the English."

G. F. MacMunn.

TALES OF THE MERMAID TAVERN.

BY ALFRED NOYES.

VI. THE BURIAL OF A QUEEN.

PART II.

"THE high State Funeral
Was held on Lammas Day. A wondrous sight
For Peterborough! For myself, I found
Small satisfaction in a catafalque
That carried a dummy coffin. None the less,
The pedlar thought that as a Solemn Masque,
Or Piece of Purple Pomp, the thing was good,
And worthy of a picture in his rhymes;
The more because he said it shadowed forth
The ironic face of Death.
The Masque, indeed,
Began before we buried her. For a host
Of Mourners—Lords and Ladies—on Lammas eve
Panting with eagerness of pride and place,
Arrived in readiness for the morrow's pomp,
And at the Bishop's Palace they found prepared
A mighty supper for them, where they sat
All at one table. In a Chamber hung
With scutcheons and black cloth, they drank red wine
And feasted, while the torches and the queen
Crept through the darkness of Northampton lanes.

At seven o'clock on Lammas Morn they woke,
After the Queen was buried; and at eight
The Masque set forth, thus pictured in the rhymes
With tolling bells, which on the pedlar's lips
Had more than paid his lodging: Thus he spake it,
Slowly, sounding the rhymes like solemn bells,
And tolling, in between, with lingering tongue:—

Toll!—From the Palace the Releevants creep,—
A hundred poor old women, nigh their end,
Wearing their black cloth gowns, and on each head
An ell of snow-white holland which, some said,
Afterwards they might keep,
—*Ah, Toll!*—with nine new shillings each to spend,
For all the trouble that they had, and all
The sorrow of walking to this funeral.

Toll!—And the Mourning Cloaks in purple streamed
Following, a long procession, two by two,
Her Household first. With these, Monsieur du Preau
Her French Confessor, unafraid to show
The golden Cross that gleamed
About his neck, warned what the crowd might do
Said *I will wear it, though I die for it!*
So subtle in malice was that Jesuit.

Toll!—Sir George Savile in his Mourner's Gown
Carried the solemn Cross upon a Field
Azure, and under it by a streamer borne
Upon a field of Gules, an Unicorn
Argent and, lower down,
A scrolled device upon a blazoned shield,
Which seemed to say—I AM SILENT TILL THE END!—
Toll! Toll!—IN MY DEFENCE, GOD ME DEFEND!

Toll!—and a hundred poor old men went by,
Followed by two great Bishops.—*Toll, ah toll!*—
Then, with White Staves and Gowns, four noble lords;
Then sixteen Scots and Frenchmen with drawn swords;
Then, with a Bannerol,
Sir Andrew Noel, lifting to the sky
The Great Red Lion. Then the Crown and Crest
Borne by a Herald on his glittering breast.

And now—ah now, indeed, the deep bell tolls!—
That empty Coffin, with its velvet pall,
Borne by six Gentlemen, under a canopy
Of purple, lifted by four knights, goes by.
The Crown Imperiall
Burns on the Coffin-head. Four Bannerols
On either side, uplifted by four squires,
Roll on the wind their rich heraldic fires.

Toll! The Chief Mourner—the fair Russell!—*toll!*—
Countess of Bedford—*toll!*—they bring her now,
Weeping under a purple Cloth of State,
Till, halting there before the Minster Gate,
Having in her control
The fair White Staves of office, with a bow
She gives them to her two great Earls again,
Then sweeps them onward in her mournful train.

Toll! At the high Cathedral door the Quires
Meet them and lead them, singing all the while
A mighty *Miserere* for her soul!
Then, as the rolling organ—*toll, ah toll!*—
Floods every glimmering aisle
With ocean-thunders, all those knights and squires
Bring the false Coffin to the central nave
And set it in the Catafalque o'er her grave.

The Catafalque was made in Field-bed wise
Valanced with midnight purple, fringed with gold:
All the Chief Mourners on dark thrones were set
Within it, as jewels in some huge carcanet:
Above was this device
IN MY DEFENCE, GOD ME DEFEND, inscrolled
Round the rich Arms of Scotland, as to say
'Man judged me. I abide the Judgment Day.'"

The sexton paused anew. All looked at him,
And at his wrinkled, grim, earth-coloured hand,
As if, in that dim light, beclouded now
With blue tobacco-smoke, they thought to see
The smouldering ruby again.
"Ye know," he said,
"How master William Wickham preached that day?"
Ford nodded. "I have heard of it. He showed
Subtly, O very subtly, after his kind,
That the white Body of Beauty such as hers
Was in itself Papistical, a feast,
A fast, an incense, a burnt-offering,
And an Abomination in the sight
Of all true Protestants. Why, her very name
Was Mary!"
"Ay, that's true, that's very true!"
The sexton mused. "Now that's a strange deep thought!
The Bishop missed a text in missing that.
Her name, indeed, was Mary!"
"Did you find
Your keys again?" "Ay, sir, I found them!" "Where?"
"Strange you should ask me that! After the throng
Departed, and the Nobles were at feast,
All in the Bishop's Palace—a great feast
And worthy of their sorrow—I came back
Carrying my uncle's second bunch of keys
To lock the doors and search, too, for mine own.
'Twas growing dusk already, and as I thrust
The key into the lock, the great grey porch
Grew cold upon me, like a tomb.
I pushed
Hard at the key—then stopped—with all my flesh
Freezing, and half in mind to fly; for, sirs,
The door was locked already, and—*from within!*

I drew the key forth quietly and stepped back
Into the Churchyard, where the graves were warm
With sunset still, and the blunt carven stones
Lengthened their homely shadows, out and out,
To Everlasting. Then I plucked up heart,
Seeing the foot-prints of that mighty Masque
Along the pebbled path. A queer thought came
Into my head that all the world without
Was but a Masque, and I was creeping back,
Back from the Mourner's Feast to Truth again.
Yet—I grew bold, and tried the Southern door.
'Twas locked,' but held no key on the inner side
To foil my own, and softly, softly, click,
I turned it, and with heart, sirs, in my mouth,
Pushed back the studded door and entered in . . .

Stepped straight out of the world, I might have said,
Out of the dusk into a night so deep,
So dark, I trembled like a child. . . .
And then
I was aware, sirs, of a great sweet wave
Of incense. All the gloom was heavy with it,
As if her Papist Household had returned
To pray for her poor soul; and, my fear went.
But either that strange incense weighed me down,
Or else from being sorely over-tasked,
A languor came upon me, and sitting there
To breathe a moment, in a velvet stall,
I closed mine eyes.
A moment, and no more,
For then I heard a rustling in the nave,
And opened them; and, very far away,
As if across the world, in Rome herself,
I saw twelve tapers in the solemn East,
And saw, or thought I saw, cowled figures kneel
Before them, in an incense-cloud.
And then,
Maybe the sunset deepened in the world
Of masques without—clear proof that I had closed
Mine eyes but for a moment, sirs, I saw
As if across a world-without-end tomb,
A tiny jewelled glow of crimson panes
Darkening and brightening with the West.
And then,
Then I saw something more—Queen Mary's vault,
And—it was open! . . .
Then, I heard a voice,
A strange deep broken voice, whispering love
In soft French words, that clasped and clung like hands;
And then—two shadows passed against the West,
Two blurs of black against that crimson stain,
Slowly, O very slowly, with bowed heads,
Leaning together, and vanished into the dark
Beyond the Catafalque.
Then—I heard him pray,—
And knew him for the man that prayed to me,—
Pray as a man prays for his love's last breath!
And then, O sirs, it caught me by the throat,
And I, too, dropped upon my knees and prayed;
For, as in answer to his prayer, there came
A moan of music, a mighty shuddering sound
From the great organ, a sound that rose and fell
Like seas in anger, very far away;
And then a peal of thunder, and then it seemed,
As if the graves were giving up their dead,
A great cowled host of shadows rose and sang:—

'Dies iræ, dies illâ,
Solvet sæclum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sibylla.'

I heard her sad, sad, little, broken voice,
Out in the darkness. 'Ay, and David, too,
His blood is on the floors of Holyrood,
To speak for me.' Then that great ocean-sound
Swelled to a thunder again, and heaven and earth
Shrivelled away; and in that huge slow hymn
Chariots were driven forth in flaming rows,
And terrible trumpets blown from deep to deep.

'Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet adparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.'

And then, ah then, the heart of heaven was hushed,
And—in the hush—it seemed an angel wept,
Another Mary wept, and gathering up
All our poor wounded, weary, way-worn world,
Even as a Mother gathers up her babe,
Soothed it against her breast, and rained her tears
On the pierced feet of God, and melted Him
To pity, and over His feet poured her deep hair.
And then—O, think you, sirs, could it be She
That sang?—one sad, sad, little broken voice:—

'Recordare, Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa Tuæ viæ,
Ne me perdas illâ die.'

The music died away. The shadows knelt.
And then—I heard a rustling nigh the tomb,
And heard—and heard—or dreamed I heard—farewells,
Farewells for everlasting, deep farewells,
Bitter as blood, darker than any death.
And, at the last, as in a kiss, one breath,
One agony of sweetness, like a sword
For sharpness, drawn along a soft white throat;
And, for its terrible sweetness, like a sigh
Across great waters, very far away,—
Sweetheart!
And then, like doors, like world-without-end doors
That shut for Everlasting, came a clang,
And ringing, echoing, through the echo of it,
One terrible cry that plucked my heart-strings out,
Mary! And on the closed and silent tomb,
Where there were two, one shuddering shadow lay,
And then—I, too,—reeled, swooned and knew no more.

Sirs, when I woke, there was a broad bright shaft
Of moonlight, slanting through an Eastern pane

Full on her tomb and that black Catafalque.
And on the tomb there lay—my bunch of keys!
I struggled to my feet,
Ashamed of my wild fancies, like a man
Awaking from a drunken dream. And yet,
When I picked up the keys, although that storm
Of terror had all blown by and left me calm,
I lifted up mine eyes to see the scroll
Round the rich crest of that dark canopy,
IN MY DEFENCE, GOD ME DEFEND. The moon
Struck full upon it; and, as I turned and went,
God help me, sirs, though I were loyal enough
To good Queen Bess, I could not help but say,
Amen!
And yet, methought it was not I that spake,
But some deep soul that used me for a mask,
A soul that rose up in this hollow shell
Like dark sea-tides flooding an empty cave.
I could not help but say with my poor lips,
Amen! Amen!
Sirs, 'tis a terrible thing
To move in great events. Since that strange night
I have not been as other men. The tides
Would rise in this dark cave"—he tapped his skull—
"Deep tides, I know not whence; and when they rose
My friends looked strangely upon me and stood aloof.
And once, my uncle said to me—indeed,
It troubled me strangely,—'Timothy,' he said,
'Thou art translated! I could well believe
Thou art two men, whereof the one's a fool,
The other a prophet. Or else, beneath thy skin
There lurks a changeling! What hath come to thee?'
And then, sirs, then—well I remember it!
'Twas on a summer eve, and we walked home
Between high ghostly hedges white with may—
And uncle Robin, in his holy-day suit
Of Reading Tawny, felt his old heart swell
With pride in his great memories. He began
Chanting the pedlar's tune, keeping the time
Thus, jingle, jingle, slowly, with his keys:—

Carry the queenly lass along!
—Cold she lies, cold and dead,—
She whose laughter was a song,
—Lapped around with sheets of lead!—
She whose blood was wine of the South,
—Light her down to a couch of clay!—
And a royal rose her mouth,
And her body made of may!
—Lift your torches, weeping, weeping,
Light her down to a couch of clay.

They should have left her in her vineyards, left her heart to her land's own keeping,
Left her white breast room to breathe, and left her light foot free to dance!
Hush! Between the solemn pinewoods, carry the lovely lady sleeping,
Out of the cold grey Northern mists, with banner and scutcheon, plume, and lance,
Carry her southward, palled in purple, weeping, weeping, weeping, weeping,—

O, ma patrie,
La plus chérie,
Adieu, plaisant pays de France!

Well, sirs, that dark tide rose within my brain!
I snatched his keys and flung them over the hedge,
Then flung myself down on a bank of ferns
And wept and wept and wept.
It puzzled him.
Perchance he feared my mind was going and yet,
O, sirs, if you consider it rightly now,
With all those ages knocking at his doors,
With all that custom clamouring for his care,
Is it so strange a grave-digger should weep?
Well—he was kind enough and heaped my plate
That night at supper.
But I could never dig my graves at ease
In Peterborough Churchyard. So I came
To London—to St Mary Magdalen's.
And thus, I chanced to drink my ale one night
Here in the Mermaid Inn. 'Twas All Souls' Eve,
And, on that bench, where master Ford now sits
Was master William Shakespeare—him you put
In that sweet rhyme," old Scarlet turned to Ben,
"I'd like to learn it. Well, the lights burned low,
And just like master Ford to-night he leaned
Suddenly forward. 'Timothy,' he said,
'That's a most marvellous ruby!'
My blood froze!
I stretched my hand out bare as it was born;
And he said nothing, only looked at me.
Then, seeing my pipe was empty, he bade me fill
And lit it for me.
Peach, the astrologer,
Was living then; and that same night I went
And told him all my trouble about this ring.
He took my hand in his, and held it—thus—
Then looked into my face and said this rhyme:—

The ruby ring, that only three
While Time and Tide go by, shall see,
Weds your hand to history.

Honour and pride the first shall lend;
The second shall give you gold to spend;
The third—shall warn you of your end.

Peach was a rogue, some say, and yet he spake
Most truly about the first," the sexton mused,
"For master Shakespeare, though they say in youth,
Outside the theatres, he would hold your horse
For pence, prospered at last, bought a fine house
In Stratford, lived there like a squire, they say.
And here, here he would sit, for all the world
As he were but a poet! God bless us all,
And then—to think!—he rose to be a squire!
A deep one, masters! Well, he lit my pipe!"

"Why did they bury such a queen by night?"
Said Ford. "Kings might have wept for her. Did Death
Play epicure and glutton that so few
Were bidden to such a feast. Once on a time,
I could have wept, myself, to hear a tale
Of beauty buried in the dark. And hers
Was loveliness, far, far beyond the common!
Such beauty should be marble to the touch
Of time, and clad in purple to amaze
The moth. But she was kind and soft and fair,
A woman, and so she died. But, why the dark?"

"Sir, they gave out the coffin was too heavy
For gentlemen to bear!"—"For kings to bear?"
Ford flashed at him. The sexton shook his head,—
"Nay! Gentlemen to bear! But—the true cause—
Ah, sir, 'tis unbelievable, even to me,
A sexton, for a queen so fair of face!
And all her beds, even as the pedlar said,
Breathing Arabia, sirs, her walls all hung
With woven purple wonders and great tales
Of amorous gods, and mighty mirrors, too,
Imaging her own softness, night and dawn,
When through her sumptuous hair she drew the combs;
And like one great white rose-leaf half her breast
Shone through it, firm as ivory."
"Ay," said Lodge,
Murmuring his own rich music under breath,
"*About her neck did all the graces throng,*
And lay such baits as did entangle death."

"Well, sir, the weather being hot, they feared
She would not hold the burying!" . . .
"In some sort,"
Ford answered slowly, "if your tale be true,

She did not hold it. Many a knightly crest
Will bend yet o'er the ghost of that small hand."

There was a hush, broken by Ben at last,
Who turned to Ford—"How now, my golden lad?
The astrologer's dead hand is on thy purse!"

Ford laughed, grimly, and flung an angel down.
"Well, cause or consequence, rhyme or no rhyme,
There is thy gold. I will not break the spell,
Or thou mayst live to bury us one and all!"
"And, if I live so long," the old man replied,
Lighting his lanthorn, "you may trust me, sirs,
Mine Inn is quiet, and I can find you beds
Where Queens might sleep all night and never move.
Good-night, sirs, and God bless you, one and all."
He shouldered pick and spade. I opened the door.
The snow blew in, and, as he shuffled out,
There, in the strait dark passage, I could swear
I saw a spark of red upon his hand,
Like a great smouldering ruby.
I gasped. He stopped.
He peered at me.
"Twice in a night," he said.
"Nothing," I answered, "only the lanthorn-light."
He shook his head. "I'll tell you something more!
There's nothing, nothing now in life or death
That frightens me. Ah, things used to frighten me!
But never now! I thought I had ten years;
But if the warning comes and says '*Thou fool,*
This night!' Why, then, I'm ready!"
I watched him go,
With glimmering lanthorn up the narrow street,
Like one that walked upon the clouds, through snow
That seemed to mix the City with the skies.

On Christmas Eve we heard that he was dead.

HOCKEN AND HUNKEN.

A TALE OF TROY.

BY "Q."

CHAPTER XI.—MRS BOSENNA PLAYS A PARLOUR GAME.

"We have runned out simultaneous," announced Mrs Bowldler next morning, as the two friends sat at breakfast in Captain Cai's parlour, each immersed (or pretending to be immersed) in his own newspaper. They had slept but indifferently, and on meeting at table had avoided, as if by tacit consent, allusions to last night's entertainment. Each of the newspapers contained a full-column report of the Regatta, with its festivities, which gave excuse for silence. With a thrill of innocent pleasure Cai saw his own name in print. He harked back to it several times in the course of his perusal, and confessed to himself that it looked very well.

But Mrs Bowldler, too, had slept indifferently, if her eyes—which were red and tear-swollen—might be taken as evidence. Her air, as she brought in the dishes, spoke of sorrow rather than of anger. Finding that it attracted no attention, she sighed many times aloud, and at each separate entrance let fall some gloomy domestic news, dropping it as who should say, "I tell you, not expecting to be believed or even heeded, still less applauded for any vigilant care of your interests, but rather that I may not hereafter reproach myself."

"We have runned out simultaneous," she repeated as Captain Cai glanced up from the newspaper. "Which I refer to coals. Palmerston tells me there's not above two-and-a-half scuttlefuls in either cellar, search them how you will." (The search at any rate could not be extensive, since the cellars measured 8 feet by 4 feet apiece.)

"Which," resumed Mrs Bowldler, after a pause and a sigh, "it may be un-Christian to say so of a man that goes about in a bath-chair with one foot in the grave, but in my belief Mr Rogers sends us short weight."

"I'll order some more this very morning, eh, 'Bias?"

'Bias grunted approval.

"And, while we're about it, we may as well order in a quantity, — as much as the sheds will hold. We've pretty well reached the end o' summer, an' prices will be risin' before long. . . . If I were you, Mrs Bowldler," added Cai with a severity beyond his wont, "I

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shouldn't call people dishonest on mere suspicion."

"If you were me, sir—makin' so bold,—you'd ha' seen more of the world with its Rogerses and Dodgerses. There now!" Mrs Bowldler set down a dish of fried potatoes and stood resigned. "Dismiss me you may, Captain Hocken, and this instant. I ask no less. It was bound to come. As my sister warned me, 'You was always high in the instep, from a child, and,' says she, 'high insteps are out of place in the Reduced.'"

"God bless the woman!" Cai laid down his paper and stared. "Who ever talked of dismissin' you?"

"I have rode in my time in a side-saddle: and that, sir, is not easily forgotten. But if you will overlook it, gentlemen," said Mrs Bowldler, tearfully, "I might go on to mention that Palmerston have had a misfortune with a tumbler last night."

Caie continued to stare. "I *saw* a couple performin' in the street yesterday. How did the boy get mixed up in it?"

"He broke it clearin' up the *debree* in the summer-house after the visitors had gone," Mrs Bowldler explained. "Which being a new departure I hope you will allow me to pass it by in his case with a caution."

In the course of the forenoon Cai paid a call at Mr Rogers's harbour-side store, where he found Mr Rogers himself superintending, from his invalid-chair, the weighing out of coal. Fancy Tabb was in attendance.

"Hullo!" Mr Rogers greeted him. "Well, the show went very well yesterday, and I see your name in the papers this morning."

Cai confessed that he, too, had seen it.

"And it won't be the last time either, not by a long way. I was wantin' a word with you. Cap'n Hunken,—eh, but that's the sort of friend to have—a man in a thousand—Cap'n Hunken was tellin' me, a few days back, as he'd a mind to see ye in public life."

"Thank'ee," said Cai. "'Bias has been nursin' that notion about me, I know. But I hope I can make up my own mind."

"He said 'twould be a distraction for ye."

"Very likely." Cai was nettled without knowing why. "But supposin' I don't need bein' distracted, not at this present?"

"Not at this present," Mr Rogers agreed. "Your friend allowed that; but he said as, all human life bein' uncertain, he was worried in mind what was goin' to become o' you in the years to come."

"Meanin' after his death?" asked Cai, with a touch of asperity.

"He didn' specify. It might ha' been death he had in mind, or it might ha' been anything you like. What he said was, 'I'd like to see old Cai fixed up wi' summat to while away his latter years.' That's how he said it, in those exact words, an' nothing could have been more kindly put."

"We're the same age, to a hair. I don't see why 'Bias

should be in all this hurry, unless between ourselves . . . But you wanted a word with me."

"Yes, on that very question. I'm on the School Board, as it happens, and I'm thinkin'—between you an' me—to send in my resignation, which will create a vacancy."

"Oh?" said Cai, alert; "I didn' know you took an interest in education."

"I don't," Mr Rogers responded frankly. "I hate the damned thing. If it rested with me, I'd have no such freaks in the land. But there's always the rates to be kept down. And likewise there's the coal contract to be considered. Added to which," he wound up, "it gives you a pull in several little ways."

"I see," said Cai after a pause. "But, if that's so, why resign?"

"Because I'm broken in health, an' can't attend the meetings. I'd have resigned six months ago if it hadn't been for Philp."

"Did Mr Philp persuade you to hold on?"

"You bet he didn't!" Mr Rogers grinned. "Philp wants the vacancy, and—well, I don't like Philp. I don't know how he strikes you?"

"To tell the truth," confessed Cai, "I can't say that I like him. He's too—inquisitive, shall we put it?—though I daresay he means it for the best."

"He's suspicious," said Mr Rogers. "You'd scarcely believe it now, but he came down to this very store, one day, an' hinted that I gave short weight in coal. 'That's all right,' said I; 'are you come to lay an information?' 'No,' says he; 'I know the cost o' the law, an' I'm here as a friend, to give a fresh order. But,' says he, 'as between friends I'm goin' to see it weighed out.' 'Right again!' says I—'how much?' 'Twelve sacks will meet my requirements for the present,' says he; 'but I'd like 'em full this time, if you don't mind.' I'm givin' you the exact words as they occurred. 'Very well,' says I, 'you shall see 'em weighed an' put into the cart for ye, here an' now.' So I ordered Bill round wi' the cart; an' George, here, I told to pick out twelve o' the best sacks, lay 'em in a row 'long-side o' me, an' start weighin' very careful. When the scales turned the hundredweight, I said, 'Now put in two great lumps for overplush and sack it up.' So he did, an' Bill took the bag out to the cart. 'Now for the next,' says I. Philp's a greedy fellow: he stuck there lookin' so hard at the weighin'-scoop, wonderin' how much overplush he'd get this go, he didn' see me twitch the tailmost sack out o' the line wi' th' end o' my crutch, nor Bill pick it up casual as he came along an' toss it away into the corner. When George had weighed out the eleven, I says to Philp, 'Well now, I hope you're satisfied this time?' says I. He turns about, sees that all the sacks have gone, an' says he, 'That's the end, is it?' 'You're a treat, an' no mistake,' says I jokin'. 'We don't

sell by the baker's dozen at this store:' for I could see he hadn' counted. 'Well,' says he, 'I must say there's no cause o' complaint this time,' and off drives Bill wi' the load. 'No cause o' complaint'!" Mr Rogers chuckled till the tears gathered in his eyes. He controlled his mirth and resumed, "I believe, though, the poor fool suspected something; for he was back at home before Bill had time to deliver more'n four sacks. But Bill, you see, always carries an empty sack or two to sit upon; so there was no countin' to be done at that end, d'ye see?"

"I see," said Cai gravely. It crossed his mind that he had been over-hasty in rebuking Mrs Bowldler.

"I wonder," put in the child Fancy, "how you can sit there an' tell such a story! That's just the sort o' thing people get put in hell for, as I've warned you again and again. It fairly gives me the creeps to hear you boastin' about it."

"Nothin' o' the sort," said her master cheerfully. He could not resent her free speaking, for she was necessary to him. Besides, it amused him. "You leave old Satan an' Johnny Rogers to settle scores between themselves. If he takes me as he finds me I'll do the same by him—*an' he knows I'll count the sacks.* Cap'n Cai here 'll tell you I'd never have put such a trick on Philp if he hadn' shown himself so suspicious. I hate a suspicious man. . . . An' that's one reason, Cap'n, why I want you to decide on takin' my place on the School Board. You see, I can choose my own time for resignin'; the Board itself fills up any vacancy that occurs between Elections: an' I can work the Board for you before Philp or any one else gets wind of it. That is, if I have your consent?"

"It's uncommonly good of you," said Cai. "I'll think it over, an' take advice, maybe."

"You know what advice your friend 'll give you, anyway. For, I don't mind tellin' you, when he talked about your enterin' public life I dropped a hint to him."

"'Bias Hunken isn' the only friend I got in the world," answered Cai, with a sudden flush.

"I hope not," said Mr Rogers. "There's me, f'r instance: an' you've heard my opinion. That ought to be good enough for him—eh, child?" he turned to Fancy, who had been watching Cai's face with interest.

"If the Captain wants feminine advice," said Fancy, in a mocking grown-up tone, "we all love public men. It's our well-known weakness."

Cai wished them good-day, and took his leave, in some confusion.

That mischievous child had divined his intent, almost as soon as he himself had divined it. Nay, now—or, to be accurate, three minutes later—it is odds that she knew it more surely than he: for he walked towards the Railway Station—that is, in the direction of Rilla Farm—telling himself at first that a stroll was, anyhow, a good recipe for clearing the brain; that Rogers's offer called

on him to make, at short notice, an important decision.

He paused twice and thrice on his way, to commune with himself: the first time by the Passage Slip, where 'Bias and he had halted to view the traffic by the jetties. He conned it now again, but with unreceptive eyes. . . . "Rogers talks to me about takin' advice," soliloquised Cai. "It seems to me this is just one of those steps on which a man must make up his own mind. . . ."

He paused again beneath the shadow of the gasometer, possibly through association of ideas (as the metaphysicians would say), because it suggested thoughts of 'Bias who had so much admired it—"'Bias means well, o' course. But I don't go about, for my part, schemin' how 'Bias is to amuse his latter days. Besides, 'Bias may be mistaken in more ways than one."

He had passed the Railway Station without being aware of it, and arrived in sight of Rilla gate, when he halted the third time. "A man must decide for himself, o' course, when it comes to the point. Still, in certain cases there's others to be considered. . . . If I knew how far she meant it! . . . She must ha' meant something." Yes, he felt the clutch on his biceps again and the small hand trembling under his large enfolding one. "She *must* ha' meant something. Not, to be sure, that it would seriously influence his decisions! But it seemed hardly fair not to consult her. . . . He would get her opinion, for what it was worth, not betraying himself. In advising him she might go—well, either a little further or a little backward. . . . Yet, once again, she *must* ha' meant something; and it wasn't fair, if she meant anything at all, to let old 'Bias go on dwelling in a fool's Paradise. Yes, certainly—for 'Bias's sake—there ought to be some clear understanding, and the sooner the better. . . ."

By the time Cai pressed the hasp of the gate, he had arrived at viewing himself as a man launched by his own strong will on a necessary errand, and carrying it through against inclination, for the sake of a friend.

"I hope it won't be a blow to him, whichever way it turns out," was the thought in Cai's mind as he knocked on the front door.

Dinah answered his knock: and, as she opened, Dinah could not repress a small start, which she hid, almost on the instant, under a demure smile of welcome.

"Captain Hocken? . . . Oh, yes! the mistress was within at this moment and entertaining a visitor. . . . Oh, indeed no! there was no reason at all"—she turned, quick about, and he found himself following her and found himself, before he could protest, at the parlour door, which she flung open announcing—

"Captain Hocken to see you, ma'am!"

Mrs Bosenna, seated at the head of her polished mahogany table and engaged upon a game of "spillikins"—which is a solitary trial of skill, and consists in lifting, one by one,

with a delicate ivory hook a mass of small ivory pieces tangled as intricately as the bones in a kingfisher's nest—showed no more than a pretty alarm at the intrusion. She had, in fact, seen Captain Hocken pass the window some moments before; and the surprise of it had not caused her to joggle the tiny hook for a moment or to miss a moment's precision. What native quickness did for her, native stolidity did almost as well for Captain Hunken, who sat in an armchair by the fireplace smoking and watching her—and had been sitting and watching her for a good half an hour admiringly, without converse. "Spillikins" is a game during which, though it enjoins silence on the looker-on, a real expert can playfully challenge a remark or tolerate one, now and again. Also, you can make astonishing play with it if you happen to possess a pretty wrist and hand.

I throw in this explanation of "spillikins" to fill up a somewhat long and painful pause during which Cai and 'Bias without speech slowly questioned one another. Neither heeded the pretty tactful clatter with which Mrs Bosenna, after sweeping her ivory toys in a heap and starting up with a little cry of pleasure, held out her hand to the intruder. Cai took it as one in a dream. His eyes were fixed on 'Bias, as 'Bias, who had withdrawn the pipe from his mouth and replaced it, withdrew it again, and asked—

"Well, an' what brings *you* here?"

For a moment Cai seemed to be chewing down a cud in his throat. He ought to have been quicker, he felt. It is always a mistake to let your adversary (Good Lord! had it come to this?) set up an interrogatory.

"I might ask you the same question," he responded.

"But you didn'," said 'Bias, solidly, crossing his legs and reaching for a box of matches from the shelf to relight his pipe. "Well?"

"Well, if you must know, I've called to consult Mrs Bosenna on a private matter of business."

This was a neat enough hint; yet strange to say it missed fire. 'Bias sucked at his pipe without budging, and answered—

"Same here."

"Please be seated, Captain Hocken," said Mrs Bosenna, covering inward merriment with the demurest of smiles. "You shall tell me your business later on—that's to say, if there's no pressing hurry about it?"

"There's no *pressin'* hurry," admitted Cai. "It's important, though, in a way—important to *me;* and any ways more important than smokin' a pipe an' watchin' you play parlour games."

"That," said 'Bias sententiously, withdrawing his pipe from his lips, "isn' business, but pleasure."

"You may not believe it, Captain Hocken," protested Mrs Bosenna, "but 'spillikins'

helps me to fix my thoughts. And you ought to feel flattered, really you ought—"

She laughed now, and archly —"Because, as a fact, I was fixing them on you at the very moment Dinah showed you in!" She threw him a look which might mean little or much. Cai took it to mean much.

"Ma'am,——" he began, but she had turned and was appealing to 'Bias.

"Captain Hunken and I were at that moment agreeing that a man of your abilities—a native of Troy, too—and, so to speak, at the height of his powers—ought not to be rusting or allowed to rust in a little place where so much wants to be done. For my part,"—her eyes still interrogated 'Bias,—"I could never live with a man, and look up to him, unless he put his heart into some work, be it farming, or public affairs, or what else you like. I put that as an illustration, of course: just to show you how it appeals to us women; and we *do* make up half the world, however much you bachelor gentlemen may pretend to despise us."

"That settles poor old 'Bias, anyhow," thought Cai, and at the same moment was conscious of a returning gush of affection for his old friend, and of some self-reproach mingling in the warm flow.

"Why, as for that, ma'am," said he, "though you put it a deal too kindly—'twas about something o' that natur' I came to consult you."

"School Board?" suggested Bias.

"That's right. I knew Rogers had dropped a hint to you about it: but o' course, seein' you here, I never guessed——"

Mrs Bosenna clapped her hands together. "And on that hint away comes Captain Hunken to ask my advice: knowing that I should be interested too. Ah, if only we women understood friendship as men do! . . . But you come and consult us, you see. . . . And now you must both stop for dinner and talk it over."

CHAPTER XII.—*AMANTIUM IRÆ.*

"What I feel about it," said Cai modestly at dinner, "is that I mightn't be equal to the position, not havin' studied education."

"Education!" echoed Mrs Bosenna in a high tone of contempt and with a half vicious dig of her carving-fork into the breast of a goose that Dinah had browned to a turn. (Both Cai and 'Bias had offered to carve for her, but she had declined their services, being anxious to provoke no further jealousy. Also be it said that the operation lends itself, even better than does the game of spillikins, to a pretty display of hands and wrists.) "Education! You know enough, I hope, to tell the Board to get rid of their latest craze. You'll hardly believe it," she went on,

turning to 'Bias, "but I happened to pass the Girls' School the other day, and if there wasn't a piano going!—yes, actually a piano! When you come to think that the parents of some of those children don't earn sixteen shillings a-week!"

"Mons'rous," 'Bias agreed.

"But I don't understand, ma'am," said Cai, "that the children themselves play the piano. I made inquiries about that, it being a new thing since my day: and I'm told it's for the teachers to use in singin' lesson, an' to help the children to keep time at drill an' what-not."

"The teachers? And who are the teachers, I'd like to know?—Nasty stuck-up things, if they want the children to keep time, what's to prevent their calling out 'One, two—right, left' like ordinary people? But—oh, dear me, no! We're quite above *that!* So it's tinkle-tum, tinkle-tum, and all out of the rates."

"But 'one, two—right, left' wouldn' carry ye far in a singin' lesson," urged Cai.

"And who *wants* all this singin'? There's William Skin, my waggoner, for instance—five children, and a three-roomed cottage—all the children attending school, and regular, too. Pleasant life it would be for William, with all five coming home with 'The Sea, the Open Sea' in their mouths and all about the house when he gets home from work! Leastways it would be, if he wasn't providentially deaf."

"Is the woman deaf, too?" asked 'Bias.

"No. She believes in Education," said Mrs Bosenna. "She's *bound* to believe in anything that takes the children off her hands five days in the week."

Cai puckered his brow. "But," said he, harking back, "I made inquiries, too, who paid for the piano, and was told the teachers had collected the money by goin' 'round with a subscription-list an' gettin' up little entertainments. So it doesn't come out of the rates."

"You appear to have had your eye on this openin' for some time," retorted Mrs Bosenna, with a faint flush of annoyance. She very much disliked being proved in the wrong. "And it's not very polite of you to contradict me!"

Cai was crestfallen at once. "I didn' mean it in that light, ma'am," he stammered; "and I only made inquiries, d'ye see? Bein' ignorant of so many things ashore. You'd be astonished how ignorant 'Bias an' me found ourselves, first-goin' off."

"Speak for yourself," put in 'Bias.

"You should have come to me," said Mrs Bosenna. "I could have told you all about Education, especially the sort that ought to be given to labourers' children; and it's astonishin' to me the way some people will talk on matters they know nothing about. My late husband made a study of the question, having been fined

five shillin' and costs, the year before he married me, just for withdrawing a dozen children from school to pick his apples for him. As luck would have it, one of them fell off a tree and broke his leg, and that gave the Board an excuse to take the matter up. My husband argued it out with the Bench. 'The children like it,' he said, 'for it keeps 'em out of doors, and provides 'em with healthy exercise. If Education sets a boy against climbling for apples, why then,' says he, speaking up boldly, 'with your Worships' leave, Education must be something clean against Nature, as I always thought it was. And the parents like it, for the coppers it brings in. And the farmer gets his apples saved. If that's so,' says he, 'here's a transaction that benefits everybody concerned, instead of which the Board goes out of its way to harass me for it.' The chairman, Sir Felix, owned he was right, too. 'Bosenna,' says he, 'I can't answer you if I would. Nothing grieves me more, sitting here, than having to administer the law as I find it. But, as things are, I can't let you off with less.'"

This anecdote, and the close arguments used by Mr Bosenna, plunged Cai in thought; and for the remainder of the meal he sat abstracted, joining by fits and starts in the conversation, now and then raising his eyes to a portrait of the deceased farmer, an enlarged and highly-tinted photograph, which gazed down on him from the opposite wall. The gaze was obstinate, brow-beating, as though it challenged Cai to find a flaw in the defence: and Cai, although dimly aware of a fallacy somewhere, could not meet the challenge. He lowered his eyes again to his plate. He found himself wondering if, in any future circumstances, Mrs Bosenna would consent to hang the portrait in another apartment. . . .

Into so deep an abstraction it cast him, indeed, that when Mrs Bosenna arose to leave them to their wine and tobacco, he scrambled to his feet a good three seconds too late. . . . 'Bias (usually lethargic in his movements) was already at the door, holding it open for her.

What was worse — 'Bias, having closed the door upon her, returned to his seat with a slight but insufferable air of patronage, and—passed the decanter of wine to him!

"You'll find it pretty good," said 'Bias, dropping into his chair and heavily crossing his legs.

Cai swallowed down a sudden tide of rage. "After you!" said he with affected carelessness. "I've tasted it afore."

"Well — if you *won't* —" 'Bias stretched out a slow arm, filled his glass, and set down the decanter beside his own dessert plate. "You'll find those apples pretty good," he went on, sipping the wine, "though not up to the Cox's Orange Pippins or the Blenheim Oranges that come along later." He smacked his lips. "You'd better try this port

wine. Maybe 'tis a different quality to what you tasted when here by yourself."

"Thank 'ee," answered Cai. "I said 'after you.'"

"Oh?" 'Bias pushed the decanter. "You weren't very tactful just now, were you?" he asked after a pause. "*Is* it the same wine?"

"O' course it is. . . . *When* wasn't I tactful?"

"Why, when you upped an' contradicted her like that." 'Bias started to fill his pipe. "Women are — what's the word?—sensitive; 'specially at their own table."

"I *didn'* contradict her," maintained Cai. "Leastways——"

"There's no reason to lose your temper about it, is there? . . . You gave me that impression, an' if you didn' give her the same, I'm mistaken."

"I'm not losin' my temper."

"No? . . . Well, whatever you did, 'tis done, an' no use to fret. Only I want you an' Mrs Bosenna to be friends —she bein' our landlady, so to speak."

"Thank 'ee," said Cai again, holding a match to his pipe with an agitated hand. "If you remember, I ought to know it, havin' had all the early dealin's with her."

"She's very well disposed to you, too," said 'Bias. "Nothing could have been kinder than the way she spoke when I mentioned this School-Board business: nothing. We'd be glad, both of us, to see you fixed up in that job."

"I wonder you didn't think of takin' it on yourself."

"I did," confessed 'Bias imperturbably.

"*You?* . . . Well, what next?"

"I thought of it. . . . Only for a moment, though. First place, I didn' want to stand in your way; an' next, as you was sayin' just now, 'tis a ticklish matter when a man starts 'pon a business he knows nothing about. But you'll soon pick it up, bein' able to give your whole time to it."

"That might apply to you."

To this 'Bias made no reply. He smoked on, pressing down the tobacco in the bowl of his pipe. The two friends sat in a constrained silence, now and again pushing the wine politely.

"When you are ready?" suggested 'Bias at length—as Cai helped himself to a final half-glassful, measuring it out with exactitude and leaving as much or may be a trifle more at the bottom of the decanter. "Ladies don't like to be kept waitin' too long."

Cai swallowed the wine and stood up, swallowing down also an inward mirth to which his anger had given way. During the last minute or two he had been recalling many things,—his first meeting with Mrs Bosenna; his first call at Rilla; her remarks, on that occasion, upon the grace of a cultivated manner in men; some subsequent glances, intimate almost; above all, the clutch upon his protective arm. . . . He felt sorry for 'Bias. Under the rosy influence of Mrs Bosenna's wine he felt genuinely sorry for 'Bias, while enjoying the humorous aspect of 'Bias's

delusion. 'Bias — for whose lack of polish he had from the first made excuse—'Bias laying down the law on what ladies liked and disliked!

They arose heavily and strolled forth to view the live-stock. It was wonderful with what ease these two retired seamen, without instruction, dropped into the farm-master's routine. So (if in other words) Dinah remarked, glancing out of the mullioned window of the kitchen as she fetched a fresh faggot for the hearth on which her mistress had already begun to set out the heavy-cake and potato-cake in preparation for tea-time.

"—the *afternoon* habits, I mean," explained Dinah. "Just glimpsy out o' window, mistress, an' see the pair o' men down there—along studyin' the pigs. Wouldn' know a pig's starn from his stem, I b'lieve, if th' Almighty hadn' clapped on a twiddling tail, same as they put in books to show where a question ends. When they come to that, they're safe. . . . But from their backs, mistress—do 'ee but take a look now, do—you wouldn' guess they weren't just as knowledgeable as th' old master himself, as used to judge pigs for the Royal Cornwall—the poor old angel! I can see him now, after the best part of a bottle o' sherry, strollin' out an' takin' an interest in the pigs——"

"Don't, Dinah!" entreated Mrs Bosenna, stealing a glance nevertheless: which Dinah demurely noted. "It's—it's all so *recent!*"

"Ay," agreed Dinah, and mused, standing boldly before the window, knuckles on hips. "You couldn' say now, takin' 'em separate, what it is that puts me in mind of th' old master."

"Go about your work, you foolish woman."

"I suppose," sighed Dinah, withdrawing her gaze reluctantly and obeying, "there's always a *something* about a man!"

Mrs Bosenna stood by the kitchen-table, patting up another hasty-cake. She had a hand even lighter than Dinah's with flour and pastry. . . . The two captains had moved on to the gate of Home Parc, and she could still espy them past the edge of the window. She saw Captain Hunken draw his hand horizontally with a slow explanatory gesture and then drop it abruptly at a right angle.

'Bias was, in fact, at that moment expounding to Cai, point by point and in a condescending way, the right outline of a prize Devon short-horn. Mrs Bosenna (who had taught him the little he knew) guessed as she watched the exposition, pursing her lips.

"A trifle o' bluffness in the entry don't matter, if you understand me," said 'Bias, retrieving his lesson. "Aft o' that, no sheer at all; a straight line till you come to the rump, —or, as we'll say, for argyment's sake, the counter—an' then a plumb drop, plumb as a quay-punt."

"Where did you pick up all this?" asked Cai.

"I don't make any secret about it," 'Bias owned. "Mrs Bosenna taught me. Though, when you come to think it out, 'tis as straightforward as sizing up a vessel. You begin by askin' yourself what the objec' in question—call it a cow, or call it a brigantine—was *designed* for. Now what's a cow designed for?"

"Milk, I suppose," hazarded Cai.

"Very well, then, I take you at that: the squarer the cow the more she holds. It stands to reason."

"I don't know." Cai made some show of obstinacy, but, it is to be feared, rather to test his friend than to arrive at the truth. "A round cow,—supposing there was such a thing——"

"But there isn't. It's out of the question."

"I speak under correction," said Cai thoughtfully; "but looking at what cows I've seen, —end on. And anyway, you can't call a cow's udder square; not in any sense o' the word."

"What beats me, I'll confess," said 'Bias, shifting the argument, "is how these butchers and farmers at market can cast their eye over a bullock an' judge his weight to a pound or two. 'Tis a trick, I suppose; but I'd like to know how it's worked."

"Why?"

"If 'twas a vessel, now, an' tons burden in place o' pounds' weight, you an' me might guess pretty right. But when it comes to a bullock!"

"I don't see," objected Cai, "how it consarns either of us."

"You don't?" asked 'Bias with a look which, for him, was quick and keen.

"To be sure I don't," answered Cai. "If it happened as I wanted to buy a bullock to eat, all at one time — and if so be as I found myself at market in search o' one, — I should be anxious about the weight. That goes without sayin.' An' the odds are I should ask the honestest-lookin' fellow handy to give a guess for me. But with you an' me 'tis a question o' two pounds o' rump steak. I know by the look if 'tis tender, and I can tell by a look at the scales if 'tis fair weight. I don't ask to be shown the whole ox."

"I daresay you're right," said 'Bias, apparently much relieved. "It'll save a lot of trouble, anyhow, if you're goin' in for public life. A man in public life can't afford time for details such as weighin' bullocks. But, for my part, I'm beginnin' to take an interest in agriculture."

"And why not?" agreed Cai. "There's no prettier occupation than farmin', so long as a man contents himself with lookin' on an' don't start practising it. Actual farmin' needs capital, o' course."

To this 'Bias made no response, but continued to stare thoughtfully at Mrs Bosenna's kine.

"After all," pursued Cai cheerfully, "these little interests are the salt of a leisurable man's life. I dare say, f'r instance, as Philp gets quite an amount o' fun out o'

funerals, though to me it seems a queer taste. Every man to his hobby; and yours, now, I can understand. When you've finished potterin' around the garden, weedin' an' plantin',—an', by the way, the season for plantin' isn't far off. It's about time we looked up those autumn catalogues we talked so much about back in the spring."

"True," said 'Bias. "It has slipped my mind of late. An' you not mentionin' either——"

"Somehow it had slipped mine too. . . . All that Regatta business, I suppose. . . . And now, if I'm to take up with this School Board there'll be more calls on my time. But there! If I turn over both the gardens to you, I reckon you won't object. 'Twill be so much the more occupation,—not, o' course," added Cai, "that I want to shirk doin' my share. But, as I was sayin', when you've done your day's job at the garden, an' taken your stroll down to the quay to pick up the evenin' gossip, what healthier wind-up can there be than to stretch your legs on a walk to one of the two-three farms in the parish, an' note how the crops are comin' on, an' the beef an' mutton, so to speak, an' how the cows are in milk; an' maybe drop in for tea an' a chat?—here at Rilla, f'r instance, where you'll always be sure of a welcome."

"You're sure o' that?" asked 'Bias. The words came slowly, heavily charged with meaning.

"Why, o' course you will! . . . 'Twas your own suggestion, mind you. 'Takin' an interest in agriculture' was your words. I don't promise, o' course, that you'll make much of it, first along. Learnin's half the fun——"

But here Mrs Bosenna's voice called to them, and they turned together to see her climbing the slope above the mow-hay, with springy gait and cheeks charmingly flushed by recent caresses of the kitchen-fire.

"If you care for it," she greeted them, "there's just time for a stroll to Higher Parc and back while Dinah lays tea. A breath of fresh air will do me all the good in the world"—little she looked to be in need of it—"and I don't suppose either of you knows what a glorious view you'll get, up there? All the harbour and shipping at your feet, and miles of open Channel beyond! My poor dear Robert used to say there wasn't its equal in Cornwall."

Cai could assure her in all innocence that he had never heard tell of Higher Parc and its famous view; nor did it occur to him to turn and interrogate his friend, who was flushing guiltily.

If Mrs Bosenna saw the flush, she ignored it. She led the way to a stile; clambered over it, declining their help, agile as a maid of seventeen; and struck a footpath slanting up and across a turnip-field at the back of the farmstead. The climb, though not steep, was continuous, and the chimneys of Rilla lay some twenty or thirty feet below them, when they reached a second stile and, overing it, stood on the edge of a mighty field, the

extent of which could not be guessed, for it domed itself against the sky, cutting off all view of hedge or limit beyond.

"This is Higher Parc," announced Mrs Bosenna. "Ten acres."

"Oh?" exclaimed Cai with a sudden flash of memory. "And stubble!"

He glanced at 'Bias. But 'Bias, who, if he heard the innuendo, read nothing in it, was gazing up the slope as though he had never set eyes on Higher Parc before in all his life.

They made their way up across the stubble, Mrs Bosenna picking her steps daintily among the sharp stalks that shone like a carpet stiff with gold against the level sunset. The shadows of the three walked ahead of them, stretching longer and longer, vanishing at length over the ridge. . . . And the view from the ridge was magnificent, as Mrs Bosenna had promised. The slope at their feet hid the jetties—or all save the tops of the loading-cranes: but out in midstream lay the sailing vessels and steamships moored to the great buoys, in two separate tiers, awaiting their cargoes. Of the sailing vessels there were Russians, with no yards to their masts, British coasters of varying rig, Norwegians, and one solitary Dutch galliot. But the majority flew the Danish flag—your Dane is fond of flying his flag, and small blame to him!—and these exhibited round bluff bows and square-cut counters with white or varnished top-strakes and sterndavits of timber. To the right and seaward, the eye travelled past yet another tier, where a stumpy Swedish tramp lay cheek-by-jowl with two stately Italian barques—now Italian-owned, but originally built in Glasgow for traffic around the Horn—and so followed the curve of the harbour out to the Channel, where sea and sky met in a yellow flood of potable gold. To the left the river-gorge wound inland, hiding its waters, around overlapping bluffs studded with farmsteads and (as the eye threaded its way into details) peopled here and there with small colonies of farm-folk working hard, like so many groups of ants,—some cutting, others saving, the yellow corn, all busy forestalling night, when no man can work.

> Uplands, where the harvesters
> Pause in the swathe, shading their eyes, to watch
> Or barge or schooner stealing up from sea:
> Themselves in twilight, she a twilit ghost
> Parting the twilit woods.

. . . While Cai and 'Bias stood at gaze, drinking it all in, Mrs Bosenna—whose senses were always quick—turned, looked behind her, and uttered a little scream.

"Steers! . . . That Middlecoat's steers—they've broken fence again! Oh—oh! and whatever shall I do?"

Cai and 'Bias, wheeling about simultaneously, were aware of a small troop of horned cattle advancing towards them leisurably, breasting the golden rays on the stubble-field, and spreading as they advanced.

"Do, ma'am?" echoed 'Bias, taking in the situation at a glance. "Why, turn 'em back, to be sure!" He started off to meet the herd.

"—While you run for the stile," added Cai, preparing to follow as bravely. But Mrs Bosenna caught his arm.

"I'm—I'm so silly," she confessed in a tremulous whisper, "about horned beasts—when they don't belong to me."

"Dangerous, are they?" asked Cai. He lingered, although 'Bias had already advanced some twenty paces to meet the herd, three or four of which had already come to a halt, astonished at being thus interrupted in an innocent ramble. "We'll head 'em off while you run."

"No, no!" pleaded Mrs Bosenna; and Cai hung irresolute, for the pressure on his arm was delicious. It crossed his mind for a moment that a lady so timid with cattle had no business to be dwelling alone at Rilla Farm.

"It's different—with my own cows," gasped Mrs Bosenna, as if interpreting and answering this thought in one breath. "I'm used to them—but Mr Middlecoat will insist on keeping these wild beasts!—though he knows I'm a lone woman and they're not to be held by any fences——"

"I'd like to give that Middlecoat a piece of my mind," growled Cai, and swore. His arm by this time was about Mrs Bosenna's waist, and she was yielding to it. But he saw 'Bias still steadily confronting the herd—saw him lift an arm, a hand grasping a hat, and wave it violently—saw thereupon the steers swing about and head back for the gate, heads down, sterns heaving and plunging. Cai swore again and reluctantly loosened his embrace.

"Run, *dear!*" The word drummed in his ears as he pelted to 'Bias's rescue. 'Bias, as a matter of fact, needed neither rescue nor support. The steers, after spreading and scattering before his first onset, were converging again in a rush back upon the open gateway. They charged through it in a panic, jostling, crushing through the narrow way: and 'Bias, still frantically waving his hat, had charged through it after them before Cai, assured now that his friend had the mastery, halted and drew breath, holding a hand to his side.

'Bias had disappeared. Cai heard his voice, at some little distance, still chivvying the steers down the lane beyond the gate. . . . Then, as it seemed, another voice challenged 'Bias's, and the two were meeting, in angry altercation.

"Mr Middlecoat!" gasped a voice close behind him. Cai swung about, and to his amazement confronted Mrs Bosenna. Instead of retreating she had followed up the pursuit.

"But I told you——" he began, in a tone of indignant command.

"You don't know Mr Middlecoat's temper. I'm afraid—if they meet——" She hurried by him, towards the gate.

Cai took fresh breath and dashed after her. They passed the gateway neck and neck.

At a turning some fifty yards down the lane — Cai leading now by a stride or two—they pulled up, panting.

'Bias, his back blocking the way, stood there confronting a young farmer: and the young farmer's face was red with a bull-fury.

"You damned trespasser!"

"Trespasser?" echoed 'Bias, squaring up. "What about your damned trespassing cattle?"

Mrs Bosenna stepped past Cai and flung herself between the combatants. Strange to say she ignored 'Bias, and faced the enemy, to plead with him.

"Mr Middlecoat, how can you be so foolish? He's as good as a prize-fighter!"

The young farmer stared and lowered his guard slowly.

"Your servant, ma'am!... A prize-fighter? Why couldn't he have told me so, at first?"

CHAPTER XIII.—FAIR CHALLENGE.

Again the two friends traversed back the valley road in silence: but this time they made no attempt to deceive themselves or to deceive one another by charging their constraint upon the atmosphere or the scenery. Each was aware that their friendship had a crisis to be overcome; each sincerely pitied the other, with some twinge of compunction for his own good fortune; each longed to make a clean breast —"a straight quarrel is soonest mended," says the proverb,— and each, as they kept step on the macadam, came separately to the same decision, that the occasion must be taken that very evening, when pipes were lit after supper. The reader will note that even yet, on the very verge of the crisis, Cai and 'Bias owned

> "Two souls with but a single thought,
> Two hearts that beat as one."

Now, in accordance with routine, supper should have been served that evening at 'Bias's table. But Cai—on his way upstairs to titivate—perceived that the lamp was lit and the cloth spread in his own parlour; and, as he noted this with a vague surprise, encountered Mrs Bowldler.

"Which, if it is agreeable, we are at home to Captain Hunken this evening," Mrs Bowldler began, in a panting hurry, and continued with a catch of the breath, "Which if you see it in a different light, I must request of you, sir, to allow Palmerston to carry down my box, and you may search it if you wish."

"Oh! conf——" began Cai in his turn, and checked himself. "I beg your pardon, ma'am; but it really does seem as if I never reach home nowadays without you meet me at the foot o' the stairs, givin' notice. What's wrong this time?"

"If you drive me to it, sir," said Mrs Bowldler in an aggrieved tone, "it's Captain Hunken's parrot."

"Captain Hunken's parrot?" echoed Cai, genuinely sur-

prised; for, in his experience, this bird was remarkable, if at all, for an obese lethargy. It could talk, to be sure. Now and again it would ejaculate "Scratch Polly," or "Polly wants a kiss," in a perfunctory way; but on the whole he had never known a more comfortable or a less loquacious bird.

"He—he made a communication to me this afternoon," said Mrs Bowldler delicately; "or, as you might prefer to put it, he passed a remark."

"What was it?"

Mrs Bowldler cast a glance behind her at the gas jet. "I really couldn't, sir. Not if you were to put out the light; and as a gentleman you won't press it."

"Certainly not," Cai assured her. He mused. "It's odd now; but I've always regarded that parrot as rather a dull bird: though of course I've never hinted that to 'Bias—to Captain Hunken."

"He wasn't dull this afternoon," asseverated Mrs Bowldler. "Oh, not by any manner of means!"

"Has he ever—er—annoyed you in this way before?"

"Never, sir."

"Has the boy ever heard him use — er — this kind o' language?"

"Which if you understand me, sir," explained Mrs Bowldler still more delicately, "the remark in question would not apply to a male party: not by any stretch. You may answer me, sir, that — the feathered tribes not being Christians—they don't calculate who's listening, but behave as the spirit moves them, like Quakers. To which I answer *you*, sir, that makes it all the worse. As it transpired, Palmerston was at the moment brushing down these very stairs, here, in the adjoining: which some might call it luck and others again Providence. But put it we'd happened to be cleaning out the room together, I must have sunk through the floor, and what would have happened to the boy's morals I leave you to guess."

Cai had to allow the cogency of this.

"As a matter of fact, sir," Mrs Bowldler continued, "I sounded Palmerston later. He declares to me he has never heard the creature use any bad language; and I believe him, for he went on to say that if he *had*, he'd have mentioned it to me. But you see my position, sir? It might even have happened with you two single gentlemen in the room. . . . Stay another twenty-four hours in the house I will not, with the chance of it staring me in the face."

Cai rubbed his chin. "I see," said he after a moment. "Well, it's awkward, but I'll speak to Captain Hunken."

He did so, almost as soon as he and 'Bias had gloomily finished their supper—a repast which largely consisted of odds-and-ends (the *debree*, in Mrs Bowldler's language) of yesternight's banquet. Each, as he ate, unconsciously compared it—such is our frail humanity—less with the good cheer of which it should have been a reminder than with the fresh abundance of Mrs Bosenna's

larder. A bachelor table and bachelor habits are all very well—until you have tasted the other thing.

To talk of the parrot, for which 'Bias had an inexplicable affection, might be awkward, as Cai had promised. But it was less ticklish anyhow than to broach the subject uppermost in the minds of both: and Cai opened on it with a sense of respite, if not of relief.

"By the way," said he, lighting his pipe and crossing his legs, "I had a chat with Mrs Bowldler before supper. She came to me complainin' about"—(puff)—"about your parrot. It seems she has taken a dislike to the bird."

"Finds his talk monotonous?" suggested 'Bias after a pause, during which he, too, puffed. Strange to say, he showed no vexation. His tone was complacent even.

"I wouldn' say that azackly. . . ."

"I'll admit 'tis monotonous," 'Bias went on, between puffs. "Call it nothing at all if you like: I don't take no truck in birds'-talk, for my part—don't mind how same it is. If that's the woman's complaint, she was free to teach it new words any time."

"But it isn't."

"Then I don't see what grievance she can have," said 'Bias with entire composure. "The bird's shapely and well-grown beyond the usual. . . . Perhaps her objection is to parrots in general—eh?" 'Bias withdrew the pipe-stem from his lips and stared hardily along it. "There's no need to trouble, anyway," he added, "for, as it happens, I'm givin' the bird away."

"Eh?" The interrogation sounded like a faint echo.

"To-morrow. To Mrs Bosenna. Why shouldn't I?"

Cai felt his body stiffen as he sat. For the moment he made no answer: then—

"Well, 'tis your affair—in a sense," he said; "but I shouldn't, if I was you."

"I promised it to her this very day. She was confidin' to me that she finds it lonely up at Rilla, and I don't wonder."

"She've confided the same thing to me several times, off and on," said Cai.

"Ah?" . . . 'Bias was unmoved. "Then maybe it'll help ye to guess how the land lies."

"It do, more or less," Cai agreed: and then, as a bright thought struck him. "Why shouldn't we lend her the musical box? It's—it's more reliable, any way."

"'Twouldn't be much account as a pet, would it?" retorted 'Bias. "Now look here, Cai!" he swung about in his chair, and for the first time since the conversation started the pair looked one another straight in the eyes. "You an' me'd best come to an understandin', and get it over. I don't mind tellin' you, as man to man, that I've been thinkin' things out; and the upshot is—I don't say 'tis certain, but 'tis probable—that in the near futur' I shall be spendin' a heap o' my time at Rilla."

"You'll be welcome. I can almost answer for it," Cai assured him heartily.

"You've noticed it, eh? . . . Well, that saves a lot o' trouble." With a grunt of relief 'Bias turned his gaze again upon the empty grate and sat smoking for a while. "I'd a sort o' fear it might come on ye sudden . . . eh? What's the matter?" He turned about again, for Cai had emitted an audible groan.

"I'm sorry for ye, 'Bias—you can't think——"

"Oh, you can stow that bachelor chaff," interrupted 'Bias with entire cheerfulness. "I used to feel that way myself, or pretend to. It's different when a man *knows*."

"I can't let ye go on like this!" Cai groaned again. "Stop it, 'Bias—do!"

"Stop it?" 'Bias stared. He was plainly amazed.

"I mean, stop talkin' about it! I do, indeed."

Still 'Bias stared. Of a sudden a partial light broke in upon him. "Good Lord!" he muttered. He arose, knocked the ashes from his pipe, laid it carefully on the chimney-shelf, slid his hands under his coat-tails, and very solemnly faced about.

"I'd an inklin' o' this, once or twice, and I don't mind confessin' it," said he, looking down with a compassionate air which Cai found insupportable. "Tho' 'twas no more than an inklin', and I put it aside, seein' as how no man with eyes could mistake the one she favoured."

"Meanin' me, o' course," interjected Cai, jabbing the tobacco down in his pipe.

"*You?*" 'Bias opened his eyes wide: then he smiled an indulgent smile. "Ho—you must excuse me—but if that isn' too rich!"

"You needn't start grinnin' like that, or you may end by grinnin' on the wrong side of your face." Cai, instead of pitying his friend's infatuation, was fast losing his temper. "What'd you say if I told you I had proofs?"

"I'd say you was a plumb liar," answered 'Bias with equal promptness, candour, and aplomb. "Proofs? *What* proofs?"

Cai hesitated a moment. . . . After all, what proof had he to cite? A gentle pressure of the arm, for example, is not producible evidence. "Never you mind," said he sullenly. "You'll have proof enough when the time comes."

'Bias received this with a dry smile. "I thought as much. You haven't any, my sonny—not so much as would cover a threepenny-bit."

"You have, I suppose?" sneered Cai.

"Heaps."

"Very well; let's have a sample. . . . You won't find it on the mantelpiece," for 'Bias had turned about and was picking up his pipe again with great deliberation.

"I've no wish to hurt your feelin's undooly," said he, eyeing the bowl for a moment and tapping out the ashes into his palm.

"Don't mind *me!*"

"But I *do* mind ye. . . . See here now, Cai," he resumed after a short pause, "we've known one another—let me see—how long?"

"Seventeen years, come

the twenty-first of November next," quickly responded Cai, fumbling at the tobacco-jar. "In Rotterdam, if you'll remember — our vessels lyin' alongside. 'Hullo,' says you."

"Far as I remember, you asked me aboard."

"Yes. 'Hullo!' says you; 'that's a pretty-lookin' craft o' your'n.' 'She'll work in an' out o' most places,' says I. 'Speedy too, I reckon,' says you, 'for a hard-wood ship; though a bit fine forra'd. A wet boat, I doubt?' 'Not a bit,' says I; 'that's a mistake strangers are apt to make about the *Hannah Hoo*. Like to step aboard an' cast a look over her fittin's? I can show ye something in the way of teak panels,' says I: and you came. That's how it began," wound up Cai, staring hard at the tobacco-jar, for — to tell the truth — a faint mist obscured his vision.

'Bias, too, was staring hard, down upon the hearth-rug between his feet.

"Ay; an' from that day to this never a question atween us we couldn' settle by the toss of a coin." He continued to stare down gloomily. "Tossin' won't help us, not in this case," he added.

"It wouldn't be respectful."

"It wouldn't be fair, neither. . . . You may talk as you please, Cai, but the widow favours me."

"I asked ye for proofs just now, if you remember."

"So you did. And if you remember I asked you for the same, not two minutes afore. We can't give 'em, neither of us: and, if we could, why—as you said a moment since—'twouldn't be respectful. Let's play fair then, damn it!"

"Certainly," agreed Cai, striking a match and holding it to his pipe. (But his hand shook.) "That's if you'll suggest how."

'Bias mused for a space. "Very well," said he at length: "then I'll suggest that we both sit down and write her a letter; post the letters together, and let the best man win."

"Couldn't be fairer," agreed Cai, after a moment's reflection.

"When I said the best man," 'Bias corrected himself, "I meant no more than to say the man she fancies. No reflection intended on you."

"Nor on yourself, maybe?" hinted Cai, with a last faint touch of exasperation. It faded, and—on an impulse of generosity following on a bright inspiration which had on the instant occurred to him — he suggested, "If you like, we'll show one another the letters before we post 'em?"

"That's as you choose," answered 'Bias. "Or afterwards, if you like — I shall keep a rough copy."

Now this was said with suspicious alacrity: for Cai was admittedly the better scholar and, as a rule, revised 'Bias's infrequent business letters and corrected their faults of spelling. But—dazzled as he was by his own sudden and brilliant idea — no suspicion occurred to him.

"It's a bargain, then?"

"It's a bargain."

They did not shake hands

upon it. Their friendship had always been sincere enough to dispense with all formalities of friendship; they would not have shaken hands on meeting (say) after a twenty years' separation. They looked one another in the eyes, just for an instant, and they both nodded.

"Cribbage to-night?" asked 'Bias.

"If 'tisn't too late," answered Cai.

He pulled out his watch, whilst 'Bias turned about to the mantel-shelf and the clock his bulk had been hiding.

"Nine-thirty," announced Cai.

"Almost to a tick," agreed 'Bias. "'Stonishing what good time we've kept ever since we set this clock."

"'Stonishing," Cai assented.

They played two games of cribbage and retired to bed. As he undressed Cai remembered his omission to warn 'Bias explicitly of what — according to Mrs Bowldler—the parrot was capable. The warning had been once or twice on the tip of his tongue during the early part of the conversation: but always (as he remembered) he had been interrupted.

"I'll warn him after breakfast to-morrow," said Cai to himself magnanimously, as he arose from his prayers. "Poor old 'Bias—what a good fellow it is, after all!"

He slept soundly, and was awakened next morning by Palmerston with the information, "Breakfast in the adjoining to-day, sir!"—this and "We are at home for breakfast" being the alternative formulæ invented by Mrs Bowldler.

"And Captain Hunken requests of you not to wait," added Palmerston, again repeating what Mrs Bowldler had imparted.

"Is he lying late to-day?" asked Cai.

"He have a-gone out for an early ramble," answered Palmerston stolidly.

"Ah! to clear his brain—poor old 'Bias," said Cai to himself, and thought no more about it. Nor did it occur to his mind that, overnight, Mrs Bowldler had point-blank refused to lay another meal in the room inhabited by the parrot, until, descending to 'Bias's parlour and becoming aware, as he lifted the teapot, that the room was brighter and sunnier than usual, he cast a glance toward the window. The parrot-cage no longer darkened it. Parrot and cage, in fact, were gone.

He turned sternly upon Mrs Bowldler. But Mrs Bowldler, setting down a dish of poached eggs, had noted his glance and anticipated his question.

"Which," said she, "I am obliged to you, sir, and prompter Captain Hunken could not have behaved. A nod, as they say, is as good as a wink to a blind horse; but Captain Hunken, being neither blind nor a horse, and anything so vulgar as winking out of the question, it may not altogether apply, though the result is the same."

(*To be continued.*)

"THE GREAT STRALOCH."

In a fine passage of "Marmion" there appears a noble Lord of Douglas blood,

> "Whose meek and thoughtful eye
> Showed little pride of prelacy;
> More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
> He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
> Than that beneath his rule he held
> The bishopric of fair Dunkeld."

So, too, in the troubled times of the Civil War, a baron of high descent and broad possessions, living in the part of Scotland most ravaged by the contending armies,—*ego in ea regione vitam agens*—he wrote himself—*ubi omnium turbarum centrum*,—though exhibiting the qualities of a judicious and temperate statesman, has left as his most enduring title to remembrance his services to the geography, the history, and the antiquities of his native land. Robert Gordon of Pitlurg and Straloch, still esteemed in the North as "The Great Straloch," was, says his contemporary Sir Thomas Urquhart, "one of the ablest men in Scotland in the mathematical faculties." He was described by Dr Garden as "a gentleman of universal Learning and great Prudence, universally beloved, esteemed by both sides, a Lover of his King and country, and a subscriber of the Covenant, but with such Limitations as excluded every meaning contrary to his allegiance to the King." His friend Robert Burnet, Lord Crimond, "a good and Learned man and a just Judge," refers to him as one "who like the people of Israel in the Land of Goshen had enjoyed a peaceable Retirement amid the Tumults of War." The judgment of a distinguished historian is that "without the common desire of fame or any more sordid motive he devoted his life and talents to illustrate the history of his country," and that "the topographical descriptions that accompany his maps are the most valuable contributions ever made to the physical history of the country."

Robert Gordon was the head of the oldest cadet branch of the great northern house of Gordon, the family of Pitlurg being the senior line of the "Jock and Tam Gordons," of whom came the majority of the families of the name in the North. He was thus the senior direct male descendant of Sir Adam Gordon, to whom Robert the Bruce gave the Lordship of Strathbogie in 1319. John of Scurdargue, his ancestor, was the eldest son of Sir John Gordon, who fought at Otterburn, by a hand-fasting connection, and nephew of Sir Adam Gordon who fell at Homildon, and whose daughter and heiress, Elizabeth Gordon, was the ancestress of the noble house of Huntly. The favourite designation of the family was that "of Pitlurg," from their lands in Banffshire, but they also held from time to time estates in Strathbogie, Buchan, and the Mearns. A tradition, discarded by Lord Huntly in his Records of Aboyne, relates that on the morning of the

battle of Brechin in the days of the Douglas Treason, the first Earl of Huntly, son of Elizabeth Gordon, "placed his second son Gight at the head of the Gordon clan, but the Laird of Pitlurg, as chief of the Gordons, claimed the leadership, which being refused, he drew aside, pulled off his black bonnet, and waving it aloft, exclaimed, 'A' that's come o' me follow me,' on which the whole clan deserted Huntly and rallied round Pitlurg." Huntly at once submitted with good-humour, and obtained the victory, of which one of his vassals, following too hard in the pursuit, and mixing with the Lindsays, heard "the Tiger Earl" of Crawford say in his own hall of Finhaven that he would willingly spend seven years in hell to win such a victory as Huntly had got that day. The tradition as told may have some anachronisms, but it probably had a basis of fact, and indicates the position Pitlurg was recognised as holding. His descendant Straloch is said to have refused a baronetcy, giving as his reason that "he would rather be the oldest baron of his name than the youngest baronet."

Robert Gordon's grandfather, "with all that accompanied him under Huntley's banner (and 29 Aberdeen's men), was slain on the field of Pinkie Cleugh in 1547." His father, Sir John Gordon, stood high in the confidence of James VI. and his chief, the Earl of Huntly, and was the intermediary in the reconciliation after the affair of the Spanish Blanks and the Battle of Glenlivet, at which the defeat of Argyll, though representative of King and Kirk, by Huntly and Erroll was tempered in the Royal mind by the reflection, "Fair fa' ye, Geordie Gordon, for sending him hame sae like a subject." After the King's march to the North it was to Pitlurg that he committed the custody of the Castle of Strathbogie and the uplifting of Huntly's rents, while the great barons of the Gordon clan, Cluny, Gight, Cairnburrow, and Buckie, had at his own house in 1593 drawn up "speciall instructions" for him as the representative of Aberdeenshire in Parliament as to proposals to be submitted to the King, the English Ambassador, and the Kirk. The relations of friendship and trust in which he stood to his Sovereign are indicated by the King's request for "a fine haikney" in view of the Royal marriage in 1589, by his "making speciall choiss" of him to be present at "the baptism of our darrest son now approching" in 1594, and by the conversion into blench of the tenure of his barony of Kinmundy, the reddendo being a pair of gilt spurs, "for the good and gratuitous service rendered to us." Sir John Gordon had married Isobel, daughter of Lord Forbes, and in 1610 was succeeded by his eldest son John in his extensive estates, including the lands of Pitlurg and others in Banff, held of the Bishop of Moray; Botarie, in Cairnie, held of the Marquis of Huntly; and the barony of Kinmundy, in Deer, in Buchan, with which had been incorporated the large property

held by the family in Drumblade in Strathbogie, and the lands of Gilcomston, near Aberdeen. To these John Gordon added Straloch in New Machar. He retained the Royal favour, for in 1609 King James wrote to him from Whitehall, thanking him heartily for "ane tersell of falcoun," but he fell into delicate health, and gradually transferred his estates to his brother Robert before his death in 1619.

Robert Gordon was born at Kinmundy on 14th September 1580. He studied at Aberdeen, and was the first graduate of Marischal College, then recently founded by George Earl Marischal. In 1598 he went to Paris, where he was on intimate terms with the cultured John Gordon, afterwards Dean of Salisbury, who had been saved by King Henry III. at the massacre of St Bartholomew, and "with the famous Mr Robert Bruce who, for an insolent speech to the king, was banished to France, where," says Straloch, "coming to himself, after many repeated sollicitations, he obtained leave of King James to return to Scotland, provided he confined himself to the northern parts." "I saw him," he adds, "during his exile in France, and had frequent familiar conversations with him there, and after his return I heard him preach at Aberdeen and saw a great change upon him: his exile had done him service: he was now become humble, mild, and gentle." On his father's death young Gordon returned home, having apparently inherited the property of Fechil, by which he is first designed. He married in 1608 Katherine, daughter of Irvine of Lenturk, by whom he had seventeen children, and resided for some years at Kinmundy, where five of his elder children were born. After obtaining the property of Straloch, about ten miles from Aberdeen, he fixed his residence there, and though he soon succeeded to the old heritage of Pitlurg retained the designation "of Straloch."

Three of Straloch's sons were active Cavaliers. The second, John of Fechil, "famous for his writing tales," was one of the little party of seven mounted men who, shortly before the battle of the Bridge of Dee, encountered an equal force of Covenanting cavalry, defeated them and took two prisoners, John Gordon capturing an Angus laird. William, the third son, "a pretty gentleman of great wit and humour, but immoderately given to his pleasures," and "a very able and understanding gentleman," was a follower of Montrose, and was intrusted by the Marquis of Huntly with a mission to the Earl of Seaforth. After Montrose disbanded, he went with Lord Aboyne to Paris, where "they were so overwhelmed with grief on hearing of the King's murder that they died the one within a few days of the other." A younger brother Arthur, who also fought for the King, became a successful advocate, and was the father of the founder of Gordon's Hospital in Aberdeen. The seventh son James, who became parson of Rothiemay, inherited his father's tastes,

assisted him in his geographical researches, and wrote from the materials collected by him the History of Scots Affairs, which is the best account of the early years of the Covenanting Wars. He was the author of the maps of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and of the "Description of both Aberdeens," as well as of a theological work. In recognition of the map of Aberdeen the Town Council presented him with a silk hat, a silver cup, and a donation for his lady.

In 1635 Straloch and his eldest son were on a commission for dealing with the rebels and broken men in connection with the disorders arising out of the burning of Frendraught, and though when the Civil War broke out he took no active part in the struggle, his counsel and advice were much valued by the Marquis of Huntly and Lord Gordon, and he more than once acted as an intermediary, his influence being always for peace. When in 1639 the Covenanters under Montrose were advancing to "visit the University" of Aberdeen, Straloch with Dr William Gordon and two representatives of Aberdeen were twice sent to negotiate by the Marquis of Huntly. On the first occasion they were received "with much appearance of outward civility" at the Earl's house of Old Montrose, and on the second found him at New Montrose "with General Leslye in his companye" and two pieces of demi-cannon. "Strange ingredients," remarks the Parson of Rothiemay, who accompanied them, "for the visitation of a Universitie." They observed as they rode north what "at the time they looked upon as a certain presage of the war and bloodshed which quickly ensued." As a little after sunrise they approached the mouth of the North Water, they "did espye the sun shining of a perfect blood colour . . . lyke to freshe bloode whereof a little quantitye is poured into a bright silver bason." The brilliancy of the colour with no mist to account for it, and the length of time the phenomenon lasted, impressed them, and James Gordon observes with Aberdonian caution that he would not have trusted his own skill to distinguish between "what was natural and what was prodigious," had he not heard the commissioners, three of whom "were weall knowne to have been able scollers and philosophes," conclude that the appearance "could not flow from any discernible natural cause."

It was by "the mediatioune of the Laird of Straloch" that, after the occupation of Aberdeen and advance to Inverury, a conference was arranged between Huntly and Montrose, and when "they grew hot in their discourse" a suggestion by him prevented a rupture. The Forbeses and Frasers, whose zeal for the Covenant was at least equalled by their hostility to Huntly, were anxious that he should be detained, but Montrose, on Straloch's advice, resisted the pressure of his associates. Unfortunately, when Huntly came into Aberdeen a little later, Montrose yielded, and by carrying him

practically a prisoner to Edinburgh, incurred the one blot that stains his personal honour, and in after years had so fatal an influence on the co-operation of the two great Scottish Cavaliers.

When Lord Aboyne, the Marquis's second son, rose at the head of the Northern barons, Straloch and Dr Gordon again went to the Earl Marischal, "travelling for peace and to eschew blood, but they gat ane bleat answer." After the Trot of Turriff "it troubled Straloch so much that some fewe should lead about a number for their own ends," that on the day the Barons were to march to the Mearns he came to Aberdeen, and urged them merely to stand on the defensive. But he was heard with impatience, and by some "entertained with scornful language," and when he offered to treat with the Earl Marischal, "Goe," said Ogilvy of Banff, "since yow are desyrous so to doe, and bee our quartermaster and harbinger, and lett Marischal know we are coming." Gordon and Burnet of Craigmyle, "two peiceabill weill-set gentlemen," went to the Earl Marischal, near Dunottar, and obtained an assurance that he would not march against the Cavaliers without orders from "The Tables," but that if attacked he would see to his own defence. Straloch returned to the Barons' quarters, "where after a coarse supper, and lying on the ground all night, he found them a great deal more tractable than they were the afternoon before in Aberdeen." When he put the query: "Who amongst them all durst be answerable to the Marquis of Huntly for to lead his men against the Earl of Marischal without a warrant from Huntly?" they could give no reply, and marched north "as confusedly as they had come unadvisedly." But again the result was unfortunate, for the Earl Marischal "constantly refusit any sic commouning with Mr Robert Gordon and James Burnet as they had promesit in his name."

The passions of civil strife were now aroused, and the dispute had passed into a stage where moderation and mediation were of no avail. Spalding notes that the Lairds of Haddo and Straloch would not keep the meetings of the Cavaliers. In 1643 Straloch is found on a taxation committee, and with the Laird of Drum, also of Royalist sympathies, on a committee for levying soldiers, with the Earl Marischal, Forbes of Pitsligo, and other pronounced Covenanters. He was at the same time acting as intermediary between the Marquis of Huntly and his eldest son Lord Gordon, who was then associated with the Covenanters, and his correspondence illustrates the reliance placed in him by the Marquis, his brother Adam of Auchindoun, and his sons Lord Gordon, Lewis, afterwards Marquis, and Charles, afterwards Earl of Aboyne. In one letter the Marquis, writing to Straloch's son, says: "Now your father is become a Statesman in the shire, his friends I hope may expect by it such

good as he may work towards the peace of the country." The gallant Lord Gordon's letters are particularly friendly. In one he warns him of the keenness of the Ministry of Aberdeen in suspecting remissness towards the Covenant; in another headed "For the rycht worshipfull Christe Ga," he tells him that if a trooper is not provided, "nothing for Cristen but plundering and quartering"; and in another, written after he had joined Montrose, and shortly before he met a glorious death at Alford, he, in default of a printed copy of the Roundheads' proclamation, sends "the copy written with my unleagable hand." After the execution of the Marquis, Straloch's advice seems to have been much relied on by his surviving sons, in the embarrassed state of the family affairs.

Throughout these troubled years Straloch, amidst the clash of arms, had been busy with his scientific and literary pursuits. In 1641 King Charles wrote to him from Holyrood:—

"Trustie & weill beloved, We greit you weill Having laitly seen certaine cairttis of divers schyres of this our ancient kingdome sent heir from Amsterdam to be correctit & helpeitt in the defects thairof, and being informed of your sufficiencie in that airtt, & your Love both to Learning and to the creditt of your Natioune we have thairfoir thoucht fitt heirby earnestly to intreitt yow to tacke so mutche paines as to reveis the saidis cairttis, and to helpe thame in sutche thingis as yow find deficient thairintill, That thay may be sent back by the directour of our Chancellarie to Holland, Quhilk as the samen will be honorabill for yourself so schall it do us good and acceptable service. And if occasioun present we shall not be unmyndfull thairof."

In 1646 he represented to Parliament that on account of his work on the maps he had been "excussed from the ordinarie burdens of the rest of the subjects in Scotland," but this had been disregarded by the present commanders, and he was daily taxed in a heavy manner. The Committee renewed all former Acts in his favour, and ordained all officers to observe them "upon their highest perills," and the Committee of War at Aberdeen having seen the Acts recommended them to Col. Montgomerie, the Commander-in-Chief. He also produced to the Aberdeen Committee a letter from the Earl of Crawford and Lindsay, which stated that he was still vexed by some unruly people, and urged that "he may be sheltered by your auctoritie from all publict burdens or injurie quhatsomever . . . that thairby he may be encouraged to go on till the perfyting of that worke so happilie begunne, quhilk as it will be acceptable & tend to the honour of this natioun so sall it oblidge us to remaine your assured good friend."

The surveys made by Timothy Pont, encouraged by Sir John Scot of Scotstarvet, Director of the Chancery, for an Atlas of Scotland, had been sent to Blaeu, the cartographer

of Amsterdam, who found them in disorder. At the King's desire Straloch undertook their revisal, and with the aid of his son James completed the work, which was first issued under the title of the 'Theatrum Scotiæ' in 1648, with a dedication to Scotstarvet, who had procured an order of the General Assembly directing the parish ministers to supply information, and in his letters mentions that a Dunkirk vessel had taken the map of Fife from a Leith ship, and that the Earl of Southesk intended to get James Gordon to draw the shire of Angus. The 'Theatrum' consisted of forty-six maps, of which seven were executed by Straloch himself from personal survey, he being the first Scotsman who practised actual mensuration. They were—

1. A Chart of Great Britain and Ireland from Ptolemy and the ancient Roman authors.
2. Scotland, as described in the Roman Itineraries.
3. Modern Scotland.
4. Fife, from actual Survey and Mensuration.
5. Aberdeen and Banff, with part of Kincardine.
6. The Inland provinces between the Tay and the Moray Firth.
7. The northern and most inaccessible parts of Scotland, including part of Skye, from actual survey.

To all were appended Treatises in which Straloch described everything remarkable, towns, castles, religious houses, antiquities, rivers, lakes, &c., in each district, and introduced notices of the most famous families. The second edition was issued in 1655, when "Straloch was much abused by the publisher, who dedicated the work to Oliver Cromwell instead of Charles II., omitted some of his best descriptions (particularly those of Aberdeenshire and Banff), and prefaced the whole with Buchanan's 'De Jure Regni.'" A third edition was published in 1664.

The Description of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff is a remarkably good piece of work. It occupies just thirty pages of the Spalding Club publications, is written in nervous and concise Latin, and deals comprehensively with the climate, physical characteristics, trees, animals, fish, and birds, the antiquities, the dignities, and the divisions of the country. It notes under the old divisions the principal residences, the leading families, and most important historical events. Straloch appears to have been the first to detect the error by which Ptolemy turned the north of Scotland to the east, and this being allowed for, to testify to the accuracy of the information obtained from the Roman soldiers and sailors. In his 'De Insula Thule Dissertatio' he argues that the classic Thule was neither Orkney, Shetland, nor Iceland, but the island of Lewis.

He was also the author of many minor treatises on the History and Antiquities of Scotland, of a Preface intended to be prefixed to Archbishop Spottiswood's History, of a

graphic description of the Scottish Highlanders, of a critical Letter in Latin to David Buchanan, containing strictures on the histories of Boece, Buchanan, and Knox, and on Buchanan's 'De Jure Regni,' and of a family history previously at Craig, and now at Gordon Castle, entitled 'Origo et Progressus Familiæ Illustrissimæ Gordoniorum in Scotia,' which comes down to 1595. It is described as "very correct as to the geography of places," but, owing to his old age and the situation of his dwelling preventing consultation of the public Records, defective in many things. "What we have of it," says William Gordon, another family annalist, "is very well done and deserves the greatest credit, for he was a gentleman of the strictest veracity." It contains anecdotes and passages which could only have been available to one on close terms with the House of Huntly.

Straloch expressed the hope that some one of fine parts would reduce the scattered papers of the time into a truthful account of the reign of Charles I., and remove the misrepresentations by which Europe had been so long imposed on. He had collected much material, and in vain endeavoured to induce Lord Crimond (father of Bishop Burnet) to undertake the work. The character of a great man is often to be traced as significantly in the letters addressed to him as in his own, and those written to Straloch by Crimond, Scotstarvet, and Professor Johnston of St Andrews are eloquent of the regard felt for him by the most judicious and cultured minds of his day, and of their common interest in and knowledge of the classics and the past of their country. He was himself a distinguished classical scholar and an accomplished master of Latin in prose and verse. One of his descendants wrote in 1780: "There are many epigrams, epitaphs, and emblems written by Straloch and his sons still remaining among the family MSS. Some of these have been published, . . . though none were intended for the public view; for it appears Mr Gordon amused himself with these trifles merely for the sake of his children, who were taught by these poetical exercises the force and elegance of the Latin language. Accordingly all of his children who lived to maturity became excellent classical scholars." The following lines, from one of his emblems, illustrate the flow of his Latin verse:—

"Parce Cupidineis mea corda lacessere telis,
Altius aspiro, purior urit amor:
. . . . . .
Me desiderium Cœlestis provocat aulæ,
Parce igitur telis, sæve Cupido, tuis.
. . . . . .
Nequit insidias fraudesque dolosque Cupido,
Me placet ætherio subdere colla jugo:
Evasi casses fraudesque Cupidinis: ignes
Ignibus extinxi: sic parta mihi quies."

In his will, dated September 1657, Straloch "recommended his soul to the Almighty my Creator and redeemer, hoping by his suffering for me to have salvation," and appointed his

body to be buried in the church of New Machar. He left to his son John a watch and medal of gold which he "had of umquhile George Lord Gordon," and to James, Minister at Rothiemay, "all maps, papers, and descriptions, the most part written and drawn with my hand, which conduce to the description of Scotland, and he to be accountable therefor to the public" after correction. His books and all such papers as concern learning and literature were to be divided among his sons Hugh, Lewis, and Arthur, "and that Alexander, altho' he be no scholar, may be contented also with such as are most expedient for him." Two hundred merks were left to the poor and indigent of New Machar. He lived long enough to witness the Restoration, and died in his eighty-first year on Sunday, 18th August 1661, survived for one year by his widow.

All the lands which belonged to him had passed from his descendants in little more than a century. His great grandson, Alexander Gordon of Pitlurg, who represented Aberdeenshire in the Union Parliament, had succeeded to an unencumbered estate, but "high living at Paris" and an unfortunate connection with Law of Lauriston and the Mississippi Scheme proved fatal to his fortunes. In 1723 he sold Kinmundy to James Ferguson of Balmakelly, and shortly afterwards parted with the ancestral Pitlurg, while Straloch was sold during a minority in 1766. "The Great Straloch" is, however, represented by the descendants of his son's younger son John, to whom inheritance from Skene and Cumming heiresses brought the estates of Parkhill, Dyce, and Birness, and by whom the old name of Pitlurg was transferred to the lands of Leask in Buchan.

The portraits of Straloch by Jameson—one preserved in the public hall of Marischal College — show the intellectual forehead and dignified mien of a cultured Scottish gentleman, wearing the cavalier moustaches and small pointed beard which are found in those of his unfortunate chief, the second Marquis of Huntly. His career affords perhaps the finest example of an accomplished type not uncommon among the gentry of the bleak and barren north. The flower of his manhood was spent in close touch with the intellectual society that is associated with the names of "the Aberdeen Doctors," and the dual universities of the capital of the country "benorth the Mounth." The later portion of his life, though passed in retirement from public affairs and in exceptional freedom from the exactions of "The Troubles," was saddened by the judicial murders of his monarch and his chief, and by the temporary destruction of all that he held most dear. But it closed in the bright light of a happy sunset, and it has left to posterity an inspiring example of assiduous service, rendered by one whose position might have been deemed to relieve him from such painstaking labour, to his countrymen's knowledge of their native land.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE FOLLY OF INTERNATIONAL SPORT—THE "DECAY" OF CRICKET —THE GAME AND THE SPECTATOR—THE ART OF LETTER-WRITING —COWPER'S LETTERS.

If you look at the word "sport" in the dictionary, you will find it explained somewhat after this fashion: "Amusement, enjoyment, diversion, fun." Whether it be pursued under a roof or in the open air, its essence is and should be pleasure and delight. The fierce egoism of victory should be no more than an incident. Sport for sport's sake is the one and only excuse which the amateur can bring forward for the self-denial of laborious days. The mere taint of professionalism is, and will always be, abhorrent to English athletes. The best test of a sportsman is that he should not grudge another the triumph of victory. Such, indeed, has always been the spirit of our countrymen, and if America and Sweden are proving their superiority in what are foolishly called the "Olympic Games," we should take our defeats like men and refrain rigidly from excuse and explanation.

It is not in this light that the Americans regard athletics. The team which represented the United States at Stockholm was "run on business lines." It was, to use its own lingo, "out to win." Mere sport is a superstition, which it did not harbour in its mind for a moment. The steamer which brought it to Sweden was chartered at enormous expense. A Government grant made the journey of its heroes easy and comfortable. Private munificence came to the aid of a generous Government, and nothing was spared which money and forethought might compass to ensure success. In the train of the heroes came a vast army of "rooters," a peculiar adjunct to athleticism happily unknown among Englishmen. We ourselves saw them four years ago at the Stadium of the White City, and do not cherish a pleasant memory of their antics. It is the business of the "rooters" to encourage their own champions, and to prove their disgust at every success that is not won under the stars and stripes. To this end they are armed with tin trumpets and unseemly things called "college yells." From sunset to sundown they shout "rah," "rah," and when off duty they may be recognised by the flags which they wave and the foolish badges which they wear in their button-holes. That they deprive sport of its amenity matters not to them. They see in sport nothing but a "serious proposition." The business of their heroes is not to amuse themselves, but to win; not to delight in their strength and prowess, but to show that

these United States can whip the universe. And, as they count up their gains, they regard lightly the outrage committed upon the traditions of the running-path. "Track tactics" are the best proof of cleverness, and probably nothing pleased them better in the contest of four years ago than the race wherein they punched an arrogant competitor in the ribs.

In other words, those who would win at the Olympic Games, we are told, must learn all the lessons of professionalism. They must not pursue their sport with the cheerful joyousness of amateurs. They must not let running and jumping be the relaxations of a busy life. They must be runners and jumpers and nothing else. They must listen to no music save the gramophone of their trainer. They must obey a new code of morals and manners, the first article in which is that it is a crime to be excelled by any man of any nation other than your own. The new code will not make for international comity. It will do nothing to encourage sport. But it will give plenty of work to the "rooters," and it will elevate sharp practice to the highest place among the virtues.

For our part, we cannot deplore the failure of our English athletes, concerning which so much has been said by exultant Americans. Our organisation may be bad; if it be so, it does not matter. Our system of training may be devised by amateurs; perhaps it is none the worse for that. At any rate, we travel across the seas to do our best and to watch the best of others. Even if we do not win, we shall have attained our end. But, object our critics, this is not enough. The failure of England in athletic sports, it is said, is a clear proof of degeneracy. We have taught the trick of running and jumping to others, and have instantly fallen behind ourselves. What does it matter, so long as we have avoided the pit of professionalism? It matters everything, says the noisy press of New York. Henceforth England is a back number in the world's history. If our champions cannot run faster and jump farther than the champions of other countries, she is "down and out" for ever. Poor England! Still poorer Germany, who has not given a much better account of herself than Italy and Greece!

The fact that the Americans lead in the Olympic Games proves neither the decadence of English courage nor the supremacy of American wisdom. It is a triumph of professionalism, and of professionalism alone. It proves that at a given moment America has trained more efficient athletes than any other part of the globe — proves that, and no more. He who wins an Olympic prize returns to America what is far greater than a hero—"a made man." He gets a post as trainer, and turns out other victors successful as himself. And it is precisely this spirit of profes-

sionalism, this lust to win, which we hope will never be introduced into Great Britain. Wherever professionalism has flourished there has been an end of sport. We all remember the curse which the idle athletes brought upon Athens. Euripides describes them, "lustrous in gold, like living statues decking the streets"; and when old age came upon them "they fell and perished like a threadbare coat." They were the worst citizens, for they knew neither how to fight nor how to give counsel; and they would not work, because they thought that he who had won a prize should live for ever at the public expense. So the Olympic Games, once blessed by God, fell into professionalism and disrepute. And if a better wisdom do not prevail, —if we do not all praise a great feat nobly done,—then the meetings called Olympic to-day will bring nothing but bad blood and misunderstanding to the world.

A better wisdom is not likely to prevail. Whatever happens, the English athlete is belaboured. Some years ago, in a moment of stress, we were reproached, and justly reproached, with an undue worship of "flannelled fools" and "muddied oafs." To-day the reproof hurled at the head of the nation is reversed. Our fools wear their flannels with too little zeal; our oafs are not sufficiently muddied. It is not difficult to see who is in the right of it. If Englishmen are wise, they will turn a deaf ear to their American critics. We hope sincerely that the day will never come when we shall estimate athletic prowess in pounds, shillings, and pence, when we shall rely upon Government grants for the training of our champions. That is not our way. We play our games with skill and energy, even though the gate may be small. The Americans purchase their base-ball heroes with thousands of dollars. They estimate their prowess and activity in the familiar currency. They build amphitheatres, in which hundreds of thousands of "fans" may sit in comfort. And doubtless for them running and jumping are but variations of base-ball. They see money in them, and think it no shame to carry their "rooters" along too.

Above all, the unseemly jealousies and tiresome wranglings which have always disgraced the Olympic Games are a clear condemnation of international sport. We do not care if the American journalists, in a pause between two rounds of the dog-fight, draw ridiculous conclusions from the failure of the English athletes. We care a good deal for the ill-feeling which may be engendered in the false name of sport between once friendly peoples. Commines said that princes should meet only to share their pleasures. What is true of princes is obviously untrue of nations. The democracies of to-day have not the nonchalance of kings. They may meet together in peace and war. They must

keep their sports rigidly apart, if they are to be good friends and decent enemies. None who witnessed the "games" at the White City four years ago will ever forget the pitiful display of ill-feeling and bad manners. In such contests as these the victors can hardly take pleasure, the vanquished can surely feel no pain. In four years' time the nations of the earth will meet in Berlin. We shall regret it exceedingly. The wisest counsel that could be given is that the Olympic Games should never be held again. If this counsel be not accepted, then let us send our athletes, where they are bidden, to do the best they may in the fair spirit of amateurs. And if they fail, let us not raise our voice aloud in protest or regret.

The truth is that sport is at its best when it is least conscious of itself. Cups, records, championships are mere disturbances of its proper office. The royal and ancient game of golf, for instance, still has its home in Scotland. It is Scotland which imposes its laws and upholds its honour. It is not Scotland which carries off the most of the prizes. Shall we say, therefore, that Scotland is decadent, degenerate, worn-out? No: rather let us congratulate the Scots on the good sense which forbids them to turn their national game into a stern business, or to specialise, with the fury of professionals, in what should be a pleasant recreation. Wherever we look, we shall find the true purpose of sport obscured. Cricket, we are told, is losing its hold upon the public. It is failing as a spectacle. While base-ball, as we have said, attracts a mob of 100,000 citizens of New York, the best advertised encounter of the cricket-field draws no more than 5000. Princely fortunes are made in America by the bold purchase of expert players. There is scarcely a county in England which does not find itself pinched in its resources, though not one of them has the smallest ambition to drag a profit out of the sport. The deficiency matters little, so long as the wickets are pitched on Saturday afternoons throughout the length and breadth of England, for after all two-and-twenty genuine players are worth a thousand lazy onlookers.

And when we examine the argument of those who demand excitement and sensation of a cricket match, in the light of history, we shall speedily recognise its absurdity. Cricket was not made for the spectators. It was the spectators who came to the cricket match. If they do not like it they may stay at home, and the game will be none the worse for their absence. It is easy for them to understand the rough-and-tumble of a football match, and with luck they may see a man break his leg, when one member of the league opposes another. But cricket demands for its appreciation a subtle knowledge, which large crowds do not possess. The cunning of the bowler is pitted against the mastery of the batsman in a contest, which always varies with the skill and style of the

time, and yet is ever the same. We may still get the same pleasure, if we have the mind and the eye for it, from seeing Barnes and Foster attack the Australians, as Nyren felt when he watched David Harris, that classic among underhand bowlers, who, with his high action, "seemed to push the ball from him," baffling the skill of "Silver Billy." But this is not the pleasure that the mob demands. There is no scandal in it. A record cannot be broken every day. There are happily few disputes in the cricket field, and the jaded spectator goes home in discontent, and confides to the newspaper that there is something the matter with cricket.

To increase the speed of cricket, to add to its "sensations," would speedily bring ruin upon it. It is leisurely in its essence. It is a game for clear skies and hot summer days. It is, moreover, an art in which the means should be reverenced as highly as the end. In the golden age of the game it seemed as important to make an elegant gesture as to score a run. Nyren, the first and greatest historian of the game, tells us little enough of big scores. He never forgets the beauty of pose, the grace of movement, which in his eyes ennobled the heroes of Hambledon. He thinks it would have "delighted an artist to see Beldham make himself up to hit a ball." He is sure, in his homely way, that "Phidias would have taken Harris for a model." In days of leisure these were the proofs of excellence—pose and movement. The amateurs of the game did not test their day's sport by the pace of the run-getting. Tom Walker once received 170 balls from David Harris without making a single run, and nobody thought him a bit the worse for it. When Aylward, in 1775, playing for Hambledon against All England, made the marvellous score of 167, he devoted two easy days to the task. The modern critics would have laughed his triumph to scorn.

The truth is, the one and only curse of cricket is the "spectator." He was invented with gate-money, test matches, international sport, and the other enemies of leisure and good-fellowship. When cricket is played for profit, and profit alone, it ceases to be a game, and becomes the foolish plaything of the majority. And if a swift return be not made to the ancient habit, then the mob will dictate to the players how they shall play, as the mob dictates to the demagogues how they shall speak. There was a time when cricket, like literature and the other arts, lived upon the generosity of patrons far too wise to prefer scandal to skill. In these days the game was free from the taint of professionalism. There was no gate-money when the enthusiasts met upon Broad Halfpenny to show what a single village might achieve against the united strength of England. If the "gentry" supported the game with their munificence, it was the vil-

lagers who defended the honour of Hambledon; and so keen were they for practice that they met on the downs every Tuesday, and drove (many of them) twenty miles for the chance of a game.

Their spirit was matched by the interest of wise amateurs. At a close finish between England and The Club there was always a quiet enthusiasm. "There was Sir Horace Mann," writes Nyren of one such scene, "walking about, outside the ground, cutting down the daisies with his stick—a habit with him when he was agitated; the old farmers leaning forward upon their tall old staves and the whole multitude perfectly still." The "multitude," we may be sure, was not large, nor did it come with shillings in its hands. Yet we would far rather that the scene described by Nyren could be matched upon the cricket fields of to-day than that we should be pestered by the bad feeling and false deductions of the Olympic Games. If fashion and sensationalism drive the mob to sports of greater speed and danger, if a friendly contest between two neighbouring clubs afford no interest to those who love to encourage international rivalry on tin-trumpets, let the mob follow its inclination. For whatever else it may be, cricket is not a circus, and it would be far better that it should be driven back to the village-greens, where it found its origin, than yield a jot to the petulant demands of idle spectators.

In many other sports besides these, which are athletic, the half is greater than the whole. Excess dogs the footsteps of ambition, and while he who would show himself better than the rest often fails miserably, the man of whom little is expected achieves in the end an easy triumph. The art or sport of letter-writing, for instance, may never be pursued in a competitive spirit. The victory is most often to those who seek it least. There was Pope, who never addressed a line to the most intimate of his friends that was not polished and rotund. His letters are as clear as crystal and as hard. As they must have inspired amazement rather than pleasure in the breasts of their recipients, so they fill us with wonder that so little lies beneath their smooth surface. We must liken them not to a free-flowing stream, but to a frozen, shallow pool, whose lack of depth not even the thickest crust of ice will conceal. Then turn to the letters of Cowper, recently edited by one who is both a scholar and a man of letters,[1] and note the difference. To William Cowper display was impossible. The ambitions which he harboured and acknowledged were the ambitions of a quiet soul. He had no wish to surpass others in wit and cleverness, or to dazzle his friends

[1] 'Letters of William Cowper, Chosen and Edited, with a Memoir and a few Notes,' by J. G. Frazer. London: Macmillan & Co.

with brilliant imagery and wild paradox. He was content to be sincere, and to set down upon paper the thoughts which flitted through his mind, the simple sights which confronted his eyes. He had no traveller's tales to tell, no marvels of experience to unfold. Yet he was not unconscious that the soul also has its adventures, and following the example of Erasmus and Sir Thomas Browne, he could still speak with a certain pride of his "extraordinary life." It was extraordinary in a sense which perhaps he did not comprehend. If the seeds of madness were planted in his mind, some at least of his friends were as little sane as himself. He was fated to be surrounded by those whose hold upon the realities of life was none of the firmest. The poor Mrs Unwin was not the lady best suited to be the life-long companion of a melancholy poet, not always master of himself and of his intentions. Yet he watched over her, and sacrificed other affections to her caprice, with a firm and touching loyalty. It was unfortunate for him that Olney and Weston Underwood should have been infested at the same time by pietists of every complexion and every sect. The grim John Newton, a kind of Admiral Guinea, who had been deeply engaged in the slave-trade before he became a minister of the Gospel, was not the best friend that a sensitive poet could have found. He confessed that his name was "up about the country for preaching people mad." Half a dozen of his flock he admitted to be disordered in their minds, and with the complete unconsciousness which allowed the tired slaver to turn clergyman, "he wondered whether the cause was the sedentary lives the women led over their lace-pillows, or the crowded little rooms in which they lived."

He need not have wondered. A little candour might have persuaded him that his own ministrations were the deadly foes of sanity. Cowper, never far from the verge of madness, needed a delicate and sympathetic treatment, and this Newton could not possibly give him. He left the poet with his mind unhinged by melancholy, and he had no better comfort to offer than an invitation to consider the case of the Rev. Simon Browne. Now, the Rev. Simon was a respectable dissenting minister who had plumbed the very depths of dejection. The cause of his affliction was not clear. Some said it came from domestic bereavement; others thought its cause was the remorse which the Rev. Simon felt for having knocked a highwayman on the head. Whatever cause, the result was certain and deplorable. The poor gentleman persuaded himself that "he had fallen under the sensible displeasure of God, who had caused his rational soul gradually to perish, and left him only an animal life in common with brutes; so that, though he retained the faculty of speaking in a manner which appeared rational to others, he

had no more notion of what he said than a parrot, being utterly divested of consciousness." In these sorry straits he made up his mind to apply to Queen Caroline for the restitution of his soul, and, being dissuaded from this extravagance, he fell to making a dictionary—a work for which, said he in a lucid interval, "the possession of a rational soul is wholly unnecessary." The mere fact that such a man should be held up as an example to Cowper proves at once the callousness of Newton's temper and the depth of the pit of melancholy into which Cowper had fallen. And then, as though Newton and the Rev. Simon were not sufficiently disconcerted, the ineffable Teedon came upon the scene.

The influence which Samuel Teedon exercised over the sensitive intelligence of Cowper is more profoundly tragic because Cowper had no illusions about him. He knew perfectly well that he was clumsy, boorish, ignorant, obsequious. He marks the man's first appearance upon the scene with a gentle irony which did not conceal his contempt. "Mr Teedon has been here," he wrote, "but is gone again. He came to thank me for an old pair of breeches. In answer to our inquiries after his health he replied that he had a slow fever which made him take all possible care not to inflame his blood. I admitted his prudence, but in his particular instance could not very clearly discern the need of it. Pump water will not heat him much; and to speak a little in his own style, more inebriating fluids are to him, I fancy, not very attainable." Such was Samuel Teedon, the man whose coarse familiarity Cowper tolerated, whom he thanked for his "spiritual aids," and whom he permitted to point out to him the beauties of his book, "as if fearful that I had overlooked some of them myself."

Biography cannot show a sadder overthrow of a noble mind. And the overthrow is all the sadder because Cowper, destined for a grave comedy, was forced all his life to play a part in grim melodrama. Had it been his good fortune to enjoy always the society of such women as Lady Hesketh and Lady Austen, he would never have fallen, one is sure, into the slough of misery which engulfed him. Until some intrigue separated him from Lady Austen, he was happy in her converse. He addresses no line to Lady Hesketh that is not instinct with a cheerful gaiety. Unhappily he fell into the wrong corner of England. He became the prey of pietists, though none ever needed their ministrations less than he, and we cannot think of Olney to-day save as a place haunted by the ravening ghosts of ignorant preachers and converted slave-dealers. However, we have said so much about Cowper and his environment because his art of letter-writing was hardly affected at all by the sinister influences around him. It was natural for him to express himself upon paper, and like a sundial he marked

only sunny days. Nor was he dependent upon events for his inspiration. Like a spider, he span out of himself the web of his fancy. Again and again he begins a letter by confessing that he has nothing to say, and instantly he follows a quiet train of thought wherever it leads him. Which is merely another way of saying that he was by nature as well as by habit a writer of letters. The only purposes he knew were to express himself and to amuse his friend. It was not for him to vaunt his prowess or to extol his talent. He was wholly incapable of writing for any other than his chosen audience, and his letters never irk you by such tricks and antics as they employ who keep their eye upon a larger public and upon posthumous fame.

The material of Cowper's letters is the mere tittle-tattle of a country village. His motto was, *Bene vixit qui bene latuit.* He tells his friends how he mends the kitchen-windows, and he takes pride in his early salads. His chief occupation in January is to walk ten times in a day from his fireside to his cucumber-frame. In the summer a promenade with Mrs Unwin or a picnic in the open air are his wildest pleasures. The story of an escaped hare, touched by his magician's wand, thrills the reader. A lion at the fair, seventy years of age, and tame as a goose, arouses his curiosity, as well it might. Under his pen, a visit of the candidate, Mr Grenville, "a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman," becomes a veritable scene from a comedy. His joys are simple, and, after friendship, are chiefly of the earth and sky. "O! I could spend whole days and moonlight nights," says he, "in feeding upon a lovely prospect! My eyes drink the rivers as they flow." On another day, in the heat of June, he writes with the classic touch which is habitual to him, "My garden languishes, and what is worse the fields too languish, and the upland grass is burnt." As for politics, he read the news, and saw that things went wrong in every quarter. He could not, if he would, be an unconcerned spectator. True patriot as he was, he saw no opportunity in the course of public events to arouse his patriotism. He could but expend his enthusiasm upon the past. "When poor Bob White brought in the news of Boscawen's success off the coast of Portugal," he writes, "how did I leap for joy! When Hawke demolished Conflans, I was still more transported. But nothing could express my rapture when Wolfe made the conquest of Quebec." As in prose, so in verse the poet rejoiced

> "That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
> And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own."

These grave thoughts were but interludes. He recognised the perfect simplicity of his life, and rejoiced. The symbol which he found for it will be intelligible to all. "Your mother and I walked yester-

day in the Wilderness," he wrote to William Unwin. "As we entered the gate, a glimpse of something white, contained in a little hole in the gate-post, caught my eye. I looked again, and discovered a bird's nest, with two tiny eggs in it. By-and-by they will be fledged, and tailed, and get wing-feathers, and fly. My case is somewhat similar to that of the parent bird. My nest is in a little nook. Here I brood and hatch, and in due time my progeny takes wing and whistles." For it must not be forgotten that he was always a poet and man of letters. His judgments are sometimes unsound. It is a grotesque perversion to say that Gray is "the only poet since Shakespeare entitled to the character of sublime." Though he perceived the genius of Burns, he made a monstrous comment upon it. "I have read Burns's poems," he says, "and have read them twice; and though they be written in a language that is new to me, and many of them on subjects much inferior to the author's ability, I think them on the whole a very extraordinary production. . . . It will be a pity if he should not hereafter divest himself of barbarism, and content himself with writing pure English, in which he appears perfectly qualified to excel. He who can command admiration dishonours himself if he aims no higher than to raise a laugh." To-day criticism has set in the opposite direction. No man of sense or man of letters would dare to prefer Burns's English verse to his incomparable poems in the vernacular, or to pretend that his masterpieces aimed no higher than a laugh. Cowper, however, was a man of his time, while Burns, a free spirit, unfettered by the years, did and thought what seemed good in his own eyes.

For the rest, Cowper displayed an admirable appreciation of Milton, and Homer, and Virgil. He lived on familiar terms with the greatest. The page in which he contrasts Pope and Dryden is a page of pure insight. And by a strange paradox, the literary figure which stalks in the background of Cowper's thought is Samuel Johnson. He was not often in sympathy with him. He deplored bitterly, as he might, the gross injustice which Johnson did to Milton. He finds many passages in the 'Lives of the Poets' of which he disapproves. Yet fear and respect mingle in his mind when it turns to Johnson. The two men never met, perhaps happily. Johnson might not have understood the shy merits of Cowper. Cowper would certainly have shown himself at his worst in the presence of the literary autocrat. Yet it was for Johnson's approval that Cowper sighed. "It is possible he may be pleased," he said, when he hoped his book was in Johnson's hands, "and if he should, I shall have engaged on my side one of the best trumpeters in the Kingdom." Alas! Johnson refused to be engaged, though there is no reason to think that he would not have appreciated

the tranquil merit of the "Task." But wherever Cowper's enthusiasm was aroused he wrote with ardour and sensibility. If he over-praised Vincent Browne, who will regret it? At any rate, he proved how warmly he admired his Muse by the tribute of translation. "I love the memory of Vinny Browne," he wrote; "I think him a better Latin poet than Tibullus, Propertius, Ausonius, or any of the writers in *his* way, except Ovid, and not at all inferior to *him*. I love him, too, with a love of partiality, because he was usher of the fifth form at Westminster when I passed through it. He was so good-natured, and so indolent, that I lost more than I got by him, for he made me as idle as himself." An amiable eulogy, in truth, and made real by a reminiscence. "I remember," adds Cowper, "seeing the Duke of Richmond set fire to his greasy locks, and box his ears to put it out again."

Such are some of the observations wherewith Cowper beguiled the leisure of his friends. And his observations beguile our leisure too, because they are perfect in style and manner. Cowper's ear was equally attuned to verse and prose, and it is impossible to read his letters without finding a pleasure in their various cadences. He rings the changes on his vowels like the unconscious master that he was. He separates harsh consonants from one another by discreet intervals. His style is perfectly adapted to its subjects and to his temperament. Discreetly gay or doucely melancholy, it admirably serves the purpose of a writer who would rather hide than reveal the sorrows of his heart. He was a natural artist, who obtained his effects without thinking too deeply of them. The sincerity of his mind dictated what he should say; and he said it well, because he could not do otherwise. In conclusion, it may be said of him what he said with truthfulness of Lady Hesketh. He had assured her that her letters were the best in the world, and thus he imagined her reply. "You will say," he wrote, "'That is impossible, for I always write what comes uppermost, and never trouble myself either about method or expression.' And for that very reason, my dear, they are what they are, so good that they could not be better. As to expression, you have no need to study it; yours is sure to be such as it ought; and as to method, you know as well as I that it is never more out of place than in a letter." But, to end on a paradox, there was method in Cowper's very absence of method, there was art in his artlessness, or we should not be reading his letters with pleasure more than a century after they were written.

THE MAKING OF THE PANAMA CANAL.

BY CHARLES PAXTON MARKHAM.

It was in 1878 when Lesseps, flushed with triumph over the success of his Suez Canal scheme, formed a Company in France to construct another canal across the narrow neck of land dividing the North and South American Continents, known as the Isthmus of Panama. The French nation to a man were willing to find him all the capital he required. After numerous difficulties work was commenced, but bribery and corruption and an under-estimation of the magnitude of the task caused the Company to fail, only to be reconstructed time and again with similar results. In addition to this, yellow fever and every possible disease known to tropical climates decimated the hordes of workmen who poured into the Isthmus from the West Indies and adjoining States. The average time that any one lived was only fifteen days, so prevalent were yellow and blackwater fever. Men had to be paid enormous wages to risk their lives in this unhealthy climate, but even so, the number of skilled men who were willing to labour under such conditions gradually gave out, and thus the work of construction came to a standstill. The United States had kept an eye for years on the progress of the French Company, as the construction of this Canal meant the easiest way of access for their war-ships from one side of the continent to the other. On the conclusion of the Spanish American War very striking sanitary work had been undertaken by the United States Government in Cuba, and as a result of these efforts the island was rendered habitable for Europeans. Encouraged by this success, negotiations were set on foot by the American Government for the purchase of the Panama undertaking from the French Canal Company, and in 1899 these negotiations were carried to a successful conclusion. The Panama Government sold for 10,000,000 dollars a strip of ground five miles on each side of the centre line of the canal, which enables them to boast they are the only Government in the world with a credit balance instead of a National Debt.

For the first year or two practically no work was done at all. Commissions and inquiries were instituted in order to investigate the unhealthy climatic conditions that existed and propound remedies. The doctors have made the Panama Canal, for without the medical profession the great work which is now coming to an end would have been an impossibility. Panama to-day is one of the most healthy places

in the world. The common house-fly and mosquito are practically unknown. These insects have been conclusively proved to be the medium by which most diseases are carried, and to any one who has only casually noticed the climatic conditions where these ravenous pests thrive and decimate whole villages, the truth of that good old saying, "Cleanliness is next to godliness," must have struck home. Panama to-day is the cleanest place in the world, and probably the healthiest. The doctor is the man who has made the country habitable. To him, and to him alone, the construction of this gigantic work must be credited. Engineering skill and ability are all very well, but when workmen fall down dead in a few hours, as they did under the administration of the French, no work could be brought to a successful completion. Following on the doctors, a commission of expert engineers was sent down to Panama, and two reports were presented to Congress, —a Majority Report which favoured a level canal, and a Minority Report which favoured locks. Ultimately the Minority Report was adopted, and wisely so, as it has been proved during the progress of construction, and work was commenced about 1908 in earnest.

As no contractors in the world were big enough to undertake the work, the U.S. Government decided to carry out the construction themselves, and the work was intrusted to the U.S. Army Engineers. The Canal has a total length of about forty miles. The water at Colon on the Caribbean Sea has a rise and fall of only two feet as compared with about eighteen at Panama on the Pacific side. There are six locks—three up and three down,—and as vessels will be travelling in both directions, the locks were duplicated, making a total of twelve in all. The French Company had decided to make locks 738 feet long and 82 feet wide; the U.S. Government have, however, increased these sizes to locks having a length of 1000 feet with 110 feet of width, and suitable for a depth of 40-feet draught of vessel, thus allowing ample margin for the biggest vessels in the world to pass through.

One of the greatest difficulties with which the old French Company had to contend was a river known as the Chagres, which in the rainy season came down with terrific force, washing away all embankments and filling up all the excavations. This river, which rises in the south, discharges into the Atlantic side of the Canal. The control of the flood water by the Americans has been one of the remarkable features of this great undertaking. To guard against the recurrence of the trouble which had baffled the French engineers, it was decided to make a dam at the Colon end of the Canal at a place called Gatun, in which are also incorporated the spillway and locks, six in number, with a total rise of 85 feet.

This dam is the largest in the world. It impounds the water over an area of 164 square miles, with a greatest depth of 90 feet. The width of the base is half a mile, its height is 115 feet above sea-level, its width at top is a quarter of a mile. It has been constructed by first tipping two rock embankments side by side, leaving a space of about 100 yards, and then pumping in mud and clay to form a water seal. The hydraulic dredges suck up the mud from the bottom of the old rivers with a considerable quantity of water. It is then forced through pipes about 18 inches in diameter over a mile in distance, and thus delivered into the centre of the dam, forming a puddle-trench impervious to water. The amount of earth and rock used in this dam is over 21 million cubic yards. In the centre of the dam is the spillway or overflow. This is built of reinforced concrete, and is 300 feet wide, and connected directly with the bed of the old Chagres river, thus keeping any overflow water from finding its way into the lower reach of the Canal seawards. It is impossible actually to realise the quantity of water running to waste from a river which it is wide of the mark to estimate as twice the size of the Thames: 306 billion cubic feet per year is about the yearly average of water to be controlled. The annual rainfall of about 220 inches occurs chiefly during the period from March to October. It is estimated that the water impounded in the artificial lake of 164 square miles will be enough for working the locks during the dry season, and also for the turbines which will supply all the electric current required for manipulating the lock gates, shuttles, &c. This latter plant is, however, to be augmented by a steam plant in case of shortage of water in the large lake, which it is estimated can be lowered some five to six feet without interfering with the passage of the largest steamer.

All the locks are alike and are constructed of concrete. A solid hill of rock known as Ancorn provides the necessary material, and excellent sand is found in the estuary at Panama. This is sucked up by hydraulic dredges and loaded into barges, from which it is transferred by grab buckets into hoppers which in turn discharge into railway wagons. There are about 4,200,000 cubic yards of concrete in the locks, and a similar number of barrels of cement will also be required. Ancorn Hill is blasted with powder and the stone then loaded up into dump wagons by means of steam shovels. These wagons are emptied direct into a stone-crusher, which is the largest in the world. It will seize and crack over 3000 cubic yards of rock per day, and will admit stones about four feet square. A terrible number of fatal accidents due to blasting have taken place right through the Canal area, chiefly owing to

carelessness on the part of the native labourers. The steam shovels and locos throw out sparks which are wafted in all directions, and one of these sparks falling into a powder tin or a hole partially charged has resulted in the loss of numerous lives. Again, an unexploded charge of dynamite may be dug out by the steam shovel, causing it to explode and destroy the whole of the men employed round the digger. The powder bill runs to about £8000 per month. There are about 560 drills worked mechanically, chiefly driven by black labour derived from the West Indies. The men obtained from islands in British possessions are well educated and infinitely superior to the native black of the Southern States. They are used as clerks and typists, and are amenable to the strict discipline which is very rigidly enforced throughout the whole of the undertaking. The head man, Colonel Goethals, and his assistant, Colonel Hodges, are men who have had large and varied experience, and the system of strict discipline they have instituted and maintain is most remarkable. One never hears an order questioned; it is obeyed at once and with a smiling face. Any laxity in obedience is known to mean instant dismissal.

Telephones are installed all over the Canal zone. Messages are written down in triplicate, as are all orders to officials. Nine hours a-day for every one (with the exception of the loco drivers) is the time worked on the Canal. The loco men work ten hours, half an hour extra being given for taking out and bringing back their locos from their respective sheds each way. There are nearly 700 locos of all sizes, but as a rule only some 380 are at work. The water is splendid. Many of the engines run for five years without having their boilers cleaned. These engines, of standard American type, are very large, having 20" cylinders, 26" stroke, 6-wheeled, coupled, with 54" drivers carrying 180 pounds of steam. They haul twenty wagons of the double bogie type and carry about 400 tons a trip. The flat dump wagons number 1800. They have only one side, the ends and other side being left off. The intervening space between the adjacent wagon is bridged over by a loose steel plate. They are all fitted with air brakes and centre buffers. The gauge of the railway is five feet,—an unusual gauge, which will make all the plant of little value at the termination of the work. The steam shovels are of various sizes,—many of them take as much as eight tons of rock at a lift. The drivers of engines of all classes are white men, with black firemen. Engine-drivers get about £2 a-day. In addition to this they have a free house or room and as much ice and coal as they want free.

Stringent rules are enforced about housing and sanitation. The houses are all of wood and protected with gauze screens round them. The entrance is through a swing-door, and woe betide any one who props or leaves a door

open. Flies and vermin of all sorts have war to the death waged continually against them by the doctors and sanitary inspectors. All ditches and gutters as far as possible are made of concrete and kept swept and cleaned. The houses are raised about four feet above ground-level, and beneath the house-floor no refuse is allowed to accumulate. The roads are coated with a mixture of tar, carbolic, and paraffin: all house refuse is instantly swept up and the streets watered two or three times a-day with carbolic and water. The Canal administration can house about 5000 whites, and in addition there are about 35,000 blacks. Every morning ice and provision trains start out and supply all signal-boxes and offices with ice and pure water. The sanitary inspectors examine all houses as often as possible, and any old tins or cooking utensils which they deem unfit for use are collected and dumped on the tips. The natives are personally dirty, but they are made to keep their houses clean and in order, or else they are expelled from the country. Other amenities of life are provided on the works. The Government runs stores where all kinds of commodities can be obtained at the lowest possible cost, but only employees are allowed to trade with these stores. The employees purchase a book of paper money with which they pay for all goods. No actual money is taken at any of the stores. In addition, at the large centres dining-rooms have been installed where the single men get their meals if they are disposed to do so. There are also a number of Y.M.C.A. rooms open to any one, and this society is doing magnificent work on the Canal by providing healthy recreation for the young folk. High-grade schools have been installed at various centres, and special trains run backwards and forwards with the children living away from the school area. The high wages earned allow parents to equip their children in plain and simple white dresses, though now and again you find other costumes bordering on vulgarity. Most of the white population are down there to make money for a few years, and then their ambition is to return to their old home, buy a piece of ground, and settle down for life.

The army of the Panama Republic is a sight to delight the heart of a Gilbert and Sullivan Major-General. On parade it numbers about one hundred men. The uniform consists of white duck trousers, button boots, blue serge tunic heavily frogged, square top yachting cap of blue with a great tortoiseshell peak. An old Brown Bess rifle, without a bayonet, completes the equipment. The colours are on a jointed bamboo pole some fifteen feet high, gorgeous in silk and tied up with bows and streamers. The national band are dressed in white, and have little ear for time or music. They, however, play in the Plaza or market-place on Sun-

day, when the whole town turns out to hear the music and parade their smartest clothes. The native girl in a flowing flowered muslin dress, an enormous hat with feathers, and a big red silk bow at the back of her head, is a feature of the scene. White shoes and stockings, yellow kid gloves, and a parasol about the size of a soup-plate, completes her attire. Her beau is resplendent in patent-leather boots, white striped trousers, straw hat, and a bright blue coat with gilt buttons. A red necktie with a diamond pin about the size of a pigeon's egg, yellow kid gloves (with a ring outside the glove), cane and cigar, give a finishing touch of magnificence to his appearance. The natives have to keep themselves strictly apart from the white population, nor are whites allowed to live in the black quarters. Special carriages are set apart for them on the regular trains and likewise on the paddy mails, and woe betide any native who attempts to enter a white man's carriage. The white police are chiefly drawn from the Frontiersmen of Canada, and are of very high standing. The native police are chiefly recruited from the West Indian possessions of this country.

Throughout the whole length of the Canal one sees the reckless waste of machinery ordered by the French Company—machinery which has never been set to work. If anything broke down it was never repaired, but a complete new machine ordered. One thus sees hundreds of old locos in sidings short of a rod or some important item; tip wagons made of steel thrown about and left to rust away. At one place — Christobal — there are about twenty huge dredgers, which have sunk in the mud owing to their hulls having rotted away; barges in sections, never used; thousands of tons of girders never put together; thousands of tons of scrap dumped anywhere and everywhere. This wanton and wicked waste is an everlasting disgrace to the French Company. The Americans have put a certain amount of this old machinery to work again, and found many engines, &c., buried in the jungle, which grows very quickly; and it is not unusual to see a tree as thick as a man's body growing through an engine or an old wagon.

The vegetation is perfectly extraordinary. The thermometer never, even at night, goes below 85° Fahr., and in the daytime the sun is intensely hot. Being so close to the Equator, your shadow is very small—practically just the ground you stand on. Cocoa-nut-trees thrive; rubber, palms, and all kinds of most beautiful tropical plants grow in every watercourse. The grass is kept burnt down to the water's edge, and along the railway the bush is cut back for a hundred yards on each side. Wherever there is any stagnant water, a barrel of paraffin and tar is installed which has a tap in it, allowing so many drops an hour to fall. The mosquito lays its eggs in the water, and it has been proved that the eggs are

rendered unfertile by the slightest contamination with oil and paraffin. These barrels have a numerous staff, whose daily work it is to replenish them and keep the bush fired. Banana-trees thrive when once the ground has been cleared, and a very considerable trade is now being done with this popular fruit. A bunch must weigh not less than fifty pounds. When the stem has once grown a bunch, it must be cut down to the ground, as otherwise they will not bear again to a profit. The cocoa-nut-trees should not have less than a hundred nuts a-year on them. Copra is being made; and the natives are also cultivating all kinds of fruit, for which they find a ready market amongst the white inhabitants — including sweet potatoes, yams, Indian corn, mangoes, and a whole host of tropical fruits which are unknown to us in England on account of their inability to travel.

At the present time the Canal is well on the way to completion, with the exception of the work at Culebra—the most gigantic engineering task ever attempted, being a cutting through a hill nine miles long. The crux of the Panama Canal lies in the power of the American engineers successfully to overcome the vast natural obstacles with which they are confronted at this point. The difficulties of carrying a canal through a hilly district of this length are stupendous. It is impossible too highly to praise the skill and intrepid courage with which obstacle after obstacle has been surmounted. To appreciate the task of the American engineers the reader must first try and form some conception of the country through which the great water-way passes at this point. The country at the Atlantic end of the Canal has a curious resemblance to the Matoppos, the sugar-loaf peaks rising in many cases upwards of a thousand feet in height. Unlike the bare South African hills, however, they are covered right up to the top with palms and tropical vegetation, forming what is practically an impenetrable jungle. Numerous deer and wild hog, however, manage to move about with comparative ease. There are a number of old gold workings about forty miles south of the Canal, and there are also one or two excellent seams of coal as yet unexploited. Culebra Cut pierces these mountains, which extend for about fourteen miles inland from the Atlantic seaboard. From this point onwards the Canal route is constructed in the river-bed of the Chagres river, which has been dredged and the water-level raised by the construction of the Gatun Dam. To give some comparative idea of the magnitude of this engineering feat it may be stated that the dome of St Paul's is 364 feet in height from the pavement to the top of the cross. The cutting at Culebra is more than half as much again, having a depth of 587 feet.

This is the only real trouble to be feared as regards the

early and successful completion of the work. One side of the cutting is known as Gold Hill, and the other Contractors' Hill. With the exception of the hill at Ancona, there is little or no solid rock to be met with. The measures are hard, and require a tremendous amount of blasting and drilling, but as soon as the rock is exposed to the atmosphere it crumbles away to dust, and in a few weeks' time trees and shrubs spring up on land which had previously been buried 400 or 500 feet deep. In the bottom of this huge chasm countless numbers of men are at work. The scene is an amazing one: great steam shovels by the score, drills by the hundred, miles of railway trains whistling and snorting, dynamite exploding. Perched up in crows'-nests are the overmen who direct the movements of all trains and supplies as they arrive. These crows'-nests are connected by telephones with the main administration buildings, and again with lower signal-boxes which keep check of the number of wagons filled by each shovel and of the number of trips made daily by each engine to the dump nine miles away. At the present time they are excavating about 75,000 cubic yards a-day. The total amount of excavation in the whole of the Canal is something like 182 million cubic yards. Of this huge amount only 30 million out of the 78 million excavated by the French Company is of service to the new route.

It is estimated that about 52 million yards still remain to be moved, and the whole of the energies of the staff are now being devoted to this particular point at Culebra. With a depth of cutting so vast, it will be readily understood that difficulties would be experienced with the slopes. The deeper the cutting the more accentuated does this become, because great slips are continually pouring down into the bottom, and the ground is developing deep cracks a mile away, showing that the whole of the hills are on the slide. How deep these may go or how far back is a matter of conjecture, but all are terribly afraid of the serious nature of the trouble that lies at this point. Steam shovels are now taking off the tops of the hills so as to relieve the pressure as far as possible in the bottom, but so far with little or no useful effect. There are several soft layers of clay which allow the rock to slide. There are also one or two huge faults which break up and disintegrate the measures. Time will prove the truth or falsehood of the numerous theories abroad, but for many years it is extremely doubtful if this canal can be kept open without constant dredging and expense, and it is very probable that the cutting will be nearly five miles across at the top before the sides cease to run in, if ever they do, for the rock in the bottom cut of all turns to mud in a short time when in contact with water, and the wash of the propellers will suck this mud away. These slides take place without any warning,

and often a train of wagons, shovels, &c., are swept down the cutting; but, so far, few lives have been actually lost, though many narrow escapes have been experienced. To deal with accidents of all kinds, two break-down trains are always under steam, one with a crane of 100-ton capacity and another of 75, capable of lifting an engine up off her side in a few minutes, and quickly getting any wreck straightened out and the line running again. The divisional engineers are provided with petrol loco-cars, and are continually running up and down their sections, receiving reports and consulting with their foremen. Most of these men are officers in the U.S. army, but one finds many officials who have worked in England, and, for that matter, all over the world, — men of the highest capability and experience. Any workman who can put forward a scheme whereby a few minutes' time or labour can be saved is at once recognised and his salary increased. Every one is strung up to concert pitch, and any carelessness or inattention to work calls for instant dismissal.

Another of the remarkable contrivances which calls for special mention is the way the cars of dirt are dumped or emptied. After the *débris* has been loaded by the huge steam shovels on to the wagons, as previously described, the train of wagons is run down from Culebra in trains of twenty, or a total length of about 200 yards long, carrying their 400 tons of stone. The guard of the train travels on the rear wagon. He carries with him a short length of brake hose-pipe and a valve, which he attaches to the rear brake pipe of the train, and should by any chance a rock become dislodged and throw a wagon off the road, he can instantly stop the train. On arriving at the dump-yard the engine is uncoupled, and picks up a wagon on which has been left a one-sided plough. This is placed on the front of the train, and the engine then returns to pick up a train of empties, and returns for another train of loaded wagons. Another engine, with a very powerful winch on a separate wagon, then comes to the rear of the train and fastens the capstan rope of the winch to an overhead cat gallows. When this is done the loco pulls the train through under the gallows, allowing the capstan rope to pay itself out over the tops of the wagons of dirt. When the last wagon which carries the plough is reached the rope is disconnected and attached to an eye-bolt in the plough. The train is then shunted to the position at which the dirt has to be unloaded. When this is reached the capstan is set to work, dragging slowly the one-sided plough over the tops of the wagons, causing the dirt to fall close alongside of the train. The plough is thus drawn from one end of the train to the other: when it reaches the last wagon nearest the engine the rope is uncoupled, and this particular wagon with the plough in position is ready

to be attached to the front end of another train. The train of empty wagons is drawn out, leaving all the dirt close alongside the railway, sometimes to a depth of four feet. This, of course, has to be removed before another train can deposit its load. A huge engine, attached to what is termed a spreader, next comes on the scene. This spreader has a ploughshare about 25 feet long and 5 feet deep. It can be adjusted for its depth of cut as required. The first ride on one of these wonderful tools calls for plenty of nerve. One sees a vast pile of *débris*, containing great rocks about seven or eight tons in weight, lying alongside of the track, and the ploughshare down in a position where it cannot possibly get through. With a snort and a whistle speed is commenced till about 30 miles an hour is obtained, and at this speed the plough is forced into the *débris*, making it fly over the face of the embankment like mud from under a motor-car tyre. The strain may, however, be too severe, in which case the engine comes to a stand, and another run is taken, till finally the whole of the excavated material is shot over the embankment, which leaves the rails and sleepers in a perfectly level road-bed. After the dirt-spreader has gone as far as it can reach on account of the length of its ploughshare, it becomes necessary to move the railway nearer to the edge of the bank. For this purpose what is known as a track-shifter is brought along. This is a crane with another fixed arm about four feet above ground-level height and boomed out away to the side to which it is desired to move the rails. Clips are fixed to the rails and the track lifted up bodily with its sleepers about three feet high. A second rope is then hooked over one of the rails from the boom and the track thus pulled across, when it is lowered in its new position. It only takes about twenty-five minutes to shift a track half a mile long into its new position. These three machines will do the work of at least 500 men, but even with this number of men the saving of time is enormous. Most of the dumping is now being done at the Panama end of the Canal seawards, enclosing thousands of acres of water and forming breakwaters to protect vessels desirous of entering the Canal. The bottom of the sea is, however, very peculiar here. Under a soft rock which lies next to the water is a bed of very soft clay, and when the dirt has been deposited to a greater extent than this rock can carry, it breaks through without any warning, lowering the surface maybe 10 or 12 feet, and very often causing the track to fall into the sea. At the same time the bottom of the sea rises up ahead of the bank to the surface of the water. It should be mentioned, however, that these breaks generally occur at low water, when the pressure on the bottom is greatest. At the Panama end a breakwater is being constructed over two miles long to two islands in the bay. On these islands will be fixed the

fortifications for the Pacific end of the Canal, and on two other islands which lie in the bay the Leper Colony and Fever Hospital are installed. A considerable quantity of dredging still remains to be done, as the bay is quite shallow and unsuitable for vessels with a deep draught of water.

The two Canal approaches call for particular notice. Colon stands in the Bay of Limon. In the Bay of Limon jetties are being run out from each side of the Bay to protect shipping from the severe northerly winds that blow at certain seasons of the year, and on Point Toro a large battery will be constructed for the defence of the Canal. The buoys in the Canal and inland lake will be acetylene, and as the sun shines every day of the year advantage of this has been taken to control automatically the lighting and dousing of these burners—*i.e.*, as soon as the sun rises the lamps in the buoys go out; when the sun goes down they relight themselves. An island a few miles away forms a quarantine station. At Colon a hotel is being constructed holding 300 beds. Steam fire-engines, horse ladders, &c., are constantly ready, as nearly all the houses are built of wood. The towns of Panama and Colon are under the direct control of the Panama Government, but the United States keep a very watchful and energetic eye over the sanitation and police arrangements of the two towns.

The following table shows the General Canal Statistics:—

Length of Canal from deep sea to deep sea .	50 miles.
Length of Canal from sea to sea . . .	40 miles.
Bottom width of Channel, maximum . .	1000 feet.
Bottom width of Channel, minimum . .	300 feet.
Estimated time of transit through Canal .	12 hours.
Excavation about	182,000,000 cubic yards.
Depth of water in Culebra Cut, the least in the whole length of Canal	45 feet.

In conclusion, prominence must be given to the enormous amount of concrete and reinforced concrete which is being used in this gigantic work. The available figures show that some four million cubic yards of concrete are being used in the construction of the huge locks and spillway. It may be the naturally conservative policy of our British engineers not to commit themselves too deeply without long and prolonged trials, and the late Sir Benjamin Baker, the greatest civil engineer we have had in this country during the past fifty years, was always somewhat timid about the use of concrete in foundations subjected to large variations of temperature. In buried foundations there has never been the slightest hesitation in adopting this form of construction, but where considerable variations of temperature obtain, from extreme cold to great heat, so far our leading engineers have refrained from committing themselves to any large extent to the use of reinforced concrete in their designs.

The reason is that simple iron or steel is extremely susceptible to variations of temperature: stone and cement are not. The relative degrees of expansion are not nearly alike. We have, therefore, the following conditions: The iron will expand, while the concrete is unable to move in the same ratio; therefore the initial stresses that are set up cause the two materials to dissociate themselves. The iron can expand and contract an indefinite number of times; not so concrete, the consequence being a crack which grows bigger and bigger year by year. The walls of the Canal locks are considerably cut away for the accommodation of the necessary machinery for manipulating the gates and valves, and in the event of the wall cracking or the foundations sinking, most serious trouble might result. It must be remembered that the lock walls extend over 3000 feet, the locks being 1000 feet long, and provision is being made for the reception of two other boats, 1000 feet long, to await an entrance and departure. Those responsible for the general design are to be commended for the conviction of their opinions on such a gigantic scale. Concrete is universally employed on the Canal works: no masonry or brickwork is to be found anywhere. It must, however, be borne in mind that the thermometer never goes below 85° Fahr., whilst at day it may go up as high in the sun as 140°, a total of 55 degrees variation. In this country we have to provide for a range of temperature varying from zero to 120°, or over twice as much, so it is difficult for a British engineer to express an actual and reliable opinion derived from authentic experience over a period of years as to the wisdom of the course pursued at Panama. But it is to be sincerely hoped that the courage and enterprise that have caused this particular form of construction to be adopted in preference to our old and proved practice may result in success. It certainly has the great advantage of doing away with all masons and bricklayers, with their attendant satellites, as concrete mixing and placing in position can be done by unskilled labour with the minimum of supervision and direction.

The total of concrete to be used represents a wall 2000 yards long, 50 yards wide, and 40 yards high — truly a stupendous work.

Any sketch of this great undertaking is necessarily incomplete, and the economic and political consequences which must result from the opening of the Canal to the world's traffic are weighty questions which lie beyond the scope of these pages. But British engineers can only look on with sympathy and goodwill at the great task accomplished by their American kinsmen at Panama in the teeth of almost superhuman difficulty, and feel that the successful completion of the Canal will be yet another triumph won by Anglo-Saxon skill, grit, and perseverance.

THE CONSTITUTION UNDER CROMWELL AND UNDER ASQUITH.

"I tell you that unless you have some such thing as a balance, we cannot be safe. By the proceedings of this Parliament, you see they stand in need of a check or balancing power. . . . This instrument of government will not do your work."—OLIVER CROMWELL.

THE complacency with which Englishmen have allowed themselves to be saddled during the last six years with ever-increasing burdens and disabilities must fill all reflective students of politics with amazement and misgiving. It is sometimes asserted that Englishmen take their pleasures sadly. Whether that be so or not, it cannot be denied that nowadays they take their politics lightly. Energy, it is true, they possess in abundance. Much solid work, too, is no doubt got through; but Englishmen more often than not devote their time and labour to a business or profession, not that they may excel in their life's work, but that they may the sooner retire and be at rest. The same spirit permeates all classes of the community, and from every side the cry goes up for shorter hours and higher pay. It is not to be expected, in such circumstances, that much attention will be paid to the fundamentals of business or politics, and so it happens that the better educated Englishman usually takes more interest in the vicissitudes of a Test Match than in the progress of a Bill through Parliament, and political opinions are, for the most part, adopted as they appear ready-made in the public press, and are seldom the outcome of individual analysis and judgment.

The Proletariat, on the other hand, always sensitive to the currents of thought which stir the hearts and minds of an intellectual order external and superior to itself, and now at length awakening to a realisation of its possibilities and of its power, is found to be peculiarly receptive of the new moral and political theories which are being so sedulously propagated. Moreover, Democracies, like armies, are strangely influenced by the example of their leaders, and throughout the ages the spirit of patriotism has been kindled and kept aglow by the devoted efforts of individual enthusiasts. A nation is not more patriotic than its leaders, and, as Lord Morley has recently pointed out at Manchester, "The star of strength and greatness rises or sinks in a State according to the proportion in its numbers of men and women with courage, energy, will, and open, supple, teachable intelligence, and possessing the power of making their qualities effectively felt."

The Roman Empire crumbled away because the people became indifferent to Imperial ideals.

The Roman people in the end refused even to fight their own battles, and gave their whole minds to attain "panem et circenses."

Upon what are the hearts of many Englishmen set to-day? Is it the maintenance of the Constitution and of the Empire, or cheap food and a pass for the next week's football match? "Crop," says Lord Morley, "depends on soil as well as seed." In our beloved country the soil is prepared and seed will be sown. But what kind of seed will it be, and who will sow it? Let those who can influence their countrymen pause on their way, and consider the signs of the times, lest calamity befall them and their children.

The Parliament Act 1911 has become the law of the land. It is impossible in this article to subject to analytical criticism its many anomalies, —for instance, that under its provisions the House of Commons cannot amend Bills which have been once rejected by the House of Lords; and that Bills may for that reason become law which are not approved by either House of Parliament. But that the Parliament Act violates the fundamentals of the British Constitution no one can doubt, for, since its enactment, the people are no longer in a position to control their own destinies, and the Crown, for the first time in English history, is involved in the vortex of party politics. "Nobody supposed," Mr Asquith has said, "that the Parliament Bill was anything but a means to an end: it is not an end in itself. The machine is there to do work."

If Parliament should enjoy the maximum lease of life under the Parliament Act (*i.e.*, five years), financial legislation, by means of Money Bills, throughout the whole of this period, is placed under the unfettered control of the House of Commons, and so far as legislation in respect of other matters is concerned, the House of Commons is endowed with such supreme authority that Bills passed by the House of Commons during the first three years of its existence will be placed on the Statute Book whether the House of Lords has given its consent to such legislation or not. It is not over-stating the position to assert that, during these periods, the government of the United Kingdom is handed over to the tender mercies of a single autocratic Chamber. Further, the authority of the House of Commons is as wide as it is uncontrolled. No legislation is excluded from the ambit of its jurisdiction, except Bills to extend the maximum duration of Parliament. Nothing is sacrosanct. A House of Commons, elected for example upon the issue of Free Trade or Tariff Reform, is at liberty to use its unfettered powers to abolish the House of Lords, to disintegrate the United Kingdom, or even to convert the Constitution of the country from a Limited Monarchy into a Republic. Do the people realise that a

Radical Administration has made it possible for legislation to be passed without the consent and, it may be, against the expressed will of the electors? If not, who is responsible for its failure to appreciate the position? No sooner had the House of Commons obtained its unfettered powers than it proceeded to vote to each of its members a salary of £400 a-year; and Bills to establish Irish Home Rule, to disestablish the Welsh Dioceses, and to lower the franchise immediately followed the passing of the Act. Can nothing be done to prevent the passage of such Bills as these until the wishes of the electors have been ascertained? If a refusal by the Upper House to pass the Army Bill or the Expiry Laws Continuance Bill be excepted, so long as the Parliament Act remains in force, the dissolution of Parliament by the Sovereign is the only means by which the opinion of the electors can be taken in respect of legislation passed by the Single Chamber of the House of Commons. But the exercise of the Prerogative for such a purpose is fraught with the utmost danger to the Monarchy and to the Empire, the constituent parts of which are bound together by a deep sense of loyalty to the Crown. The abolition of the power of the House of Lords to prevent the passage of Bills sent up from the House of Commons has laid a heavy and invidious responsibility upon the Sovereign. It is no longer the privilege and the duty of the House of Lords to reject legislation which, in its opinion, is opposed to the wishes of the people; for the difficult task of interpreting public opinion is, by the Parliament Act, shifted from the House of Lords on to the shoulders of the King. Sometimes, indeed, it is easy to gauge the wishes of the electors—for instance, in the case of the Home Rule Bill in 1893 and the Licensing Bill in 1908. Nevertheless, the position in which the Crown is placed by reason of the provisions of the Parliament Act is one beset with pitfalls; and if the King were to dissolve Parliament, in the mistaken belief that the policy of the House of Commons would not be confirmed by the electors, the result would be a collision—not between the House of Lords and the House of Commons, but between the Sovereign and his people. Who can contemplate without misgiving the outcome of such a crisis?

By the Parliament Act the Monarchy is threatened and the electorate defrauded of its rights. Every amendment suggested by Unionists to safeguard the rights of the people was contemptuously rejected by those who reiterate that they are the representatives of the people. It used to be the boast of Liberals in the past that they put their trust in the people; it is very clear that in the future they intend to legislate without consulting them.

While the Parliament Act

in practice will be fraught with danger to the State, the methods by which the Radical Administration secured its passage into law were both unprecedented and amazing.

To seize the Prerogative of the Crown for the purpose of overcoming resistance to the Parliament Bill in the House of Lords was an outrage on the Constitution; to obtain a pledge from the Crown that a sufficient number of Peers would be created to secure its passage through the Upper House before that Chamber had even considered, much less rejected, the Bill, was an even grosser breach of duty on the part of the Government; but to obtain the Crown's pledge before the Bill had passed either House of Parliament, proves that His Majesty's present advisers are quite indifferent to the elementary principles of constitutional procedure. In this matter Mr Asquith and his colleagues stand self-condemned, for Mr Asquith in the House of Commons, on February 21, 1910, laid down that "To ask in advance for a blank authority for an indefinite exercise of the Royal Prerogative, in regard to a measure which has never been submitted to or approved by the House of Commons, is a request which, in my judgment, no constitutional statesman can properly make, and it is a concession which the Sovereign cannot be expected to grant. I say this in order that there may be absolutely no misunderstanding on this point." The whole story is well known, and there is no need to repeat it, but it may be of interest to point out the almost painful analogy between the position taken up by the Radical Government and the course pursued by the Long Parliament of Charles I. The object of the House of Commons, in each case, was to subvert the Constitution and to set up an omnipotent Single Chamber, and the method adopted in each case was the same, both in principle and in detail, the only difference between the Parliamentary proceedings of 1649 and 1911 being, that, whereas Oliver Cromwell with his army and his unflinching character was able to coerce the more violent fanatics who sat in the Long Parliament, Mr Asquith is unable to stem the tide of revolution which is rising among the Radical myrmidons, and is unwilling to sacrifice party or personal expediency to gain a permanent settlement of the constitutional problem.

On July 2, 1912, Mr Bonar Law pithily summed up the position in the House of Commons: "What Mr Asquith has done is to drop the reins, throw them on the neck of the horse, and allow it to gallop where it pleases, on the one condition that he is still allowed to cling to the saddle."

In January 1649, King Charles I. was in the hands of the Revolutionaries. The majority in the Commons were set upon bringing him to trial, but the House of Lords, then a small body, obstructed the

way. On January 2, the House of Commons invited the House of Lords to approve an ordinance appointing 150 Commissioners to try the King, which the House of Lords unanimously refused to do. Thereupon, on January 4, the House of Commons passed the following resolutions :—

> "*Resolved*, That the Commons of England in Parliament assembled do declare that the people are, under God, the original of all just power;" and do also declare :—
>
> "That the Commons of England in Parliament assembled, being chosen by and representing the people, have the Supreme Power in this Nation;" and do also declare :—
>
> "That whatsoever is enacted or declared for law by the Commons in Parliament assembled hath the force of law, and all the People of this Nation are concluded thereby, although the consent and concurrence of King or House of Peers be not had there-unto."

These resolutions bear so striking a resemblance to the resolutions passed by the House of Commons under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in 1907, and to the terms of the Parliament Act itself, that the similarity cannot well be accidental.

Mr Asquith, who is a master of carefully weighed prevarications and sonorous pronouncements, has stated that the Veto of the House of Lords ought to be "as dead as Queen Anne." What did he mean by this except that the House of Commons should be made an omnipotent Single Chamber? Moreover, the House of Commons, both in 1649 and in 1911, refused to allow members of the Upper House to have any voice in settling the method of their political destruction.

On February 6, 1649, the House of Commons negatived the following resolution :—

> "That this House take the advice of the House of Lords in the exercise of the legislative power in pursuance of the vote of this House, the 4th January."

In like manner, His Majesty's Government intimated to the House of Lords that they would not, under any circumstances, consider amendments which the House of Lords might make to the Parliament Bill, although it would effectively deprive them of their immemorial right to be necessary parties to legislation, for Lord Crewe stated in the House of Lords, on February 16, 1910, "Your Lordships are entitled to express your opinion, as undoubtedly you will, upon the actual propositions of the Parliament Bill, but I may as well say at once that we cannot enter into any discussion of amendments. We are prepared to put this measure before the House, for the House to take or the House to leave it."

On March 17, 1649, the Kingly office, and on March 19th the House of Peers were abolished by "Act" of the

House of Commons, pursuant to the following resolutions passed on February 6th and February 7th.

February 6, 1649:—

"That the House of Peers is useless and dangerous, and ought to be abolished, and that an Act be brought in for that purpose."

February 7, 1649:—

"That it hath been found by experience, and this House doth declare, That the Office of a King in this Nation . . . is unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous to the liberty, safety, and public interest of the People of this Nation, and therefore ought to be abolished."

The virtual abolition of the Veto of the Sovereign in matters of legislation, and the surrender of the Peers in August 1911, relieved Mr Asquith and his confederates from the necessity of pursuing to the bitter end the course followed by the Long Parliament, and the action of the majority of the House of Lords in assisting the passage of the Parliament Bill will, perhaps, save Mr Asquith from impeachment in proceedings similar to those taken against the Duke of Ormonde and Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke in 1715, but who will affirm that the abolition of the House of Lords, and even of the Monarchy, would be inconsistent with the aspirations of some members—at any rate, of the Radical and Labour Parties?

The failure of the supporters of the Constitution to direct the attention of the public to the Single Chamber experiment of 1649-1657, which forms the precedent, but not an excuse, for the course adopted by the Radical Administration, is one of the most remarkable features of the present constitutional struggle. Similar methods were pursued in each case. Will the results be different? Is it not wise, in these circumstances, to recall the progress of the omnipotent Single Chamber set up during the Great Rebellion, and bear in mind the lessons of the Past? Experientia docet! Radical and Socialist politicians are never weary of portraying the Utopian legislation which, as they say, will surely flow from a House of Commons unfettered by obstruction in the "other place," as sunshine returns after the storm. No whit less alluring was the vision set before the electorate by the Revolutionaries under the Commonwealth, but the conduct of the Long Parliament teaches a very different lesson. Alike in administration and in legislation, it acted with a tyranny which is the invariable concomitant of uncontrolled authority. "It is important," wrote John Stuart Mill in his work on Representative Government, "that no set of persons should in great affairs be able, even temporarily, to make their sic volo prevail, without asking any one else for his consent. A majority in a Single Assembly, when it has assumed a permanent character—when com-

posed of the same persons habitually acting together and always assured of victory in their own House — easily becomes despotic and overweening if released from the necessity of considering whether its Acts will be concurred in by another constituted authority: The same reason which induced the Romans to have two Consuls, makes it desirable that there should be two Chambers; that neither of them may be exposed to the corrupting influence of undivided power, even for the space of a single year;" and he adds: "This salutary habit, the mutual give and take (as it has been called) between two Houses, is a perpetual school, useful as such even now, and its utility would probably be even more felt in a more democratic constitution of the Legislature."

Oliver Cromwell, unlike Mr Asquith, was prepared to exercise a restraining influence over his more violent adherents, but, like Mr Asquith, he found it beyond his power to dam the torrent which he himself had let loose. "Nor can they," said Cromwell in 1652, "be kept within the bounds of justice, law, or reason; they themselves being the Supreme Power of the Nation, liable to no account to any, nor to be controuled or regulated by any other Power, there being none superior or co-ordinate with them: so that, unless there be some Authority and Power, so full and so high as to restrain and keep things in better order, and that may be a check to these exorbitancies, it will be impossible, in human reason, to prevent our ruin"; and again, in 1654, "Poor men, under this arbitrary power, were driven like flocks of sheep by forty in a morning to the confiscation of goods and estates without any man being able to give a reason that two of them had deserved to forfeit a shilling. I have given you but a taste of their miscarriages." Nay more, in 1652, by means of the New Representation Bill, the Long Parliament actually sought to enact that the House of Commons should consist of 400 members, that the old members (eighty-five in number) should retain their seats without re-election, and should be entitled to veto any new members in all future Parliaments. Truly, it was "the horridest arbitrariness that ever existed on earth."

The sequel is equally instructive. On May 25, 1657, the Humble Petition and Advice was presented to Cromwell, whereby it was prayed "That your Highness will, for the future, be pleased to call Parliaments consisting of two Houses once in three years at furthest, and that no law be altered, suspended, abrogated, or repealed, or new laws made, but by Act of Parliament."

The Single Chamber Constitution, under the Commonwealth, was abolished by Cromwell, whose authority and influence had originally set it up. No sooner had the Revolution been consummated than his master mind perceived that the "instrument would not do its work," and with courage

and determination he set himself to the task of restoring the balance of the Constitution.

At the presentation of the Humble Petition and Advice Lord Commissioner Fiennes spoke these memorable words: "This Constitution of a Chief Magistrate and two Houses of Parliament is not a pageantry, but is so consonant to Reason, that it is the very emblem and idea of Reason itself. If anything inconvenient should chance to slip out at one door, must it not pass two more before it come abroad to the detriment of the people? How exact and of how great respect and authority will be all your Acts, Laws, and Resolutions, when as after that they have passed the examination of that Great Body, which sees with the eyes of the three Nations, and is acquainted with the condition, and sensible of the necessities of every individual part thereof, they shall then pass a second scrutiny, and be published and refined by such as, during life, shall make it their business either to fit themselves for, or to be exercised in things of that nature (being also assisted by all the reverend judges of the land and other learned persons of that robe, so oft as there shall be occasion to require their advice), and when, as after all this, they must pass also the judgment and assent of the Chief Magistrate, who is placed on high as upon a watch-tower, from whence he may observe at one view and discover the state of the whole Body Politic and every part thereof."

Can an Asquith afford to disregard the teachings of a Cromwell? Is Mr Asquith able or willing to follow the constructive as well as the destructive policy of the Protector, and to restore the balance of the Constitution which he has destroyed?

The broken pledge of the preamble of the Parliament Act demonstrates that he is not; and, if that be so, has the Commonwealth no lesson for the People themselves? If the Parliament Act is to be repealed, well and good—but if not, what alternative method of legislation have the Radical Government to offer?

Mr Churchill supplied the necessary information on this point in the House of Commons on May 1, 1911. "If the Government had not changed, it was not easy to see why it should immediately wish to suspend the operation of a measure which had only recently been passed. If again, a new Government came in, then presumably that Government would be in command of a Parliamentary majority, and what was to prevent that Government repealing the measure?" But what is to become of the "continuity of legislation" under which citizens may know, with comparative certainty, the laws to which they must needs conform? Will it be an easy, or indeed a possible policy, to reunite Great Britain and Ireland after Home Rule has been established, or to take back a new franchise from those upon whom it has been conferred?

Every one knows that such a thing would be impossible.

Cromwell, in September 1654, pointed out that a Constitutional Instrument, such as that set up by the Parliament Act, could never do its work. "Of what assurance is a law, if it lie in one and the same Legislature to unlaw it again? Is this like to be lasting? It will be a rope of sand. It will give no security; for the same men may unbuild what they have built." And again: "There are many circumstantial things which are not like the laws of the Medes and Persians, but the things which it shall be necessary to deliver over to Posterity, these shall be unalterable. Else each succeeding Parliament will be disputing to change and alter the Government, and we shall be as often brought into confusion as we have Parliaments, and so make our remedy our disease."

By reason of its inherent defects, a Constitution under which supreme power is vested in a single Authority, whether it be a Monarch or a Popular Assembly, is in any case predestined to failure; but the danger to the community of an unfettered Single Chamber is proportionately diminished or increased, as the franchise is restricted or widely distributed. The peculiar attributes of Democracy account for this phenomenon, which is well known to those who are conversant with the principles of political science—and, among the civilised nations of the world, the more democratic the Constitution, the more stringent are found to be the safeguards provided against an abuse of authority by the Popular Assembly.

The necessity of a Second Chamber, possessed of co-ordinate authority with the First Chamber, as an integral part of every well-ordered Constitution has not, of course, been universally or at all times recognised.

The Revolutionaries in France, like the present Radical Government, considered the existence of a Second Chamber of little, if any, importance. "If," runs the famous epigram of the Abbé Siéyès, "a Second Chamber dissents from the First, it is mischievous; if it agrees, it is superfluous."

But the Abbé Siéyès, like Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, desired the will of the House of Commons to prevail, because he assumed that the popular assembly was the "mirror of the people." Such an assumption cannot survive the test either of history or of criticism. "(1) Qui est-ce que le Tiers Etat? Tout. (2) Qu'a-t-il été jusqu'à présent dans l'ordre politique? Rien. (3) Que demande-t-il? A être quelque chose." So runs the first page of the famous pamphlet of 1789. If Siéyès meant by the Third Estate the uninstructed classes of the people only, he was obviously in error, while if he meant the entire community, Sir Henry Maine has pointed out that people are not agreed as to what the entire community consists of.

Of course, if vox populi is in truth vox Dei, the Abbé Siéyès and the supporters of an uncontrolled Single Chamber are undoubtedly in the right. But was not Sir Henry Maine justified in asking, "Is the voice of the People the voice which speaks through scrutin d'arrondissement, or scrutin de liste, by plebiscite, or by tumultuary Assembly? Is it a sound in which the note struck by minorities is entirely silent? Is the People which speaks the People according to household suffrage, or the People according to universal suffrage, the People with all the women excluded from it, or the People, men, women, and children together assembling casually in voluntary meeting? None of these questions have been settled: some have hardly been thought about. In reality, the devotee of Democracy is much in the same position as the Greeks with their oracles. All agreed that the voice of an oracle was the voice of a God; but everybody allowed that when he spoke he was not as intelligible as might be desired, and nobody was quite sure whether it was safer to go to Delphi or to Dodona."

Surely, in political matters, it is better to walk by sight than by faith, and whether they are judged by the test of criticism or past history or contemporary experience, it must be admitted that the principles underlying the Parliament Act are both unsound and undemocratic. On November 28, 1908, during the Second Reading of the Licensing Bill in the House of Lords, Lord Loreburn, then the Radical Lord Chancellor, said: "I know very well that the subject is unpopular, and it may have influenced the recent by-election. But I think that it is our duty to stand by the Bill, no matter how many by-elections may have gone against us." Again, Mr Lloyd George, speaking recently on the Insurance Act at Birmingham, laid down that "it is rather late in the day to say that working men ought not to be compelled to do anything they did not like when they would be benefited by it." Behold the Radical interpretation of the "Government of the People for the People by the People"!

In the teeth of these and innumerable similar utterances can any reasonable man assert with any regard to accuracy that the House of Commons is the "mirror of the People," or that the measures which have passed the present House of Commons have coincided with the wishes of the electors, or even with the opinions of the members of Parliament themselves? The truth is, that under Democracy parliamentary and electoral votes are usually solicited and allocated with less regard to the interests of the community as a whole, or the wishes of the constituents, than under any other form of Government. It is a fallacy to suppose that Democracies seek "the greatest good of the greatest number"; on the contrary, the wider the franchise the narrower is the outlook of the electorate, and

the more readily are votes influenced by appeals to class prejudice, and by the wiles and catchwords of artful demagogues. "Political liberty," said Hobbes, "is political power," but in Democracies political power is "minced in morsels," and, as Sir James Stephen has pointed out, "The man who can sweep the greatest number of fragments of political power into one heap will govern the rest; the strongest man in one form or another will always rule; . . . in a pure Democracy the ruling men will be wirepullers and their friends: . . . in some ages a powerful character; in others cunning; in others power of transacting business; in others eloquence; in others a good hold upon commonplaces, and a facility in applying them to practical purposes, will enable a man to climb on his neighbours' shoulders and drag them this way or that; but under all circumstances the rank and file are directed by leaders of one kind or another who get the command of their collective force." It is of paramount importance, therefore, in a democratic country that the leaders of the people should be men of high moral character. Integrity without ability will, at any rate, never corrupt the people; but ability without integrity will always tend to cheat the electorate of its rights, and deprive a nation of its freedom. A popular assembly, however, when endowed with unfettered authority, is a school in which corruption, not rectitude, is taught. The members of such a body learn to follow and not to lead their constituents, and to pander to the desires of the noisiest sections of their supporters, if only they may perchance retain their seats and their emoluments. They carry through their Parliamentary duties "listening nervously at one end of a speaking-tube which receives at its other end the suggestions of a lower intelligence." They are, indeed, elected by the people, but they represent themselves. The Framers of the American Constitution were well aware of this. Alexander Hamilton, writing in 1788 in the 'Federalist,' perhaps the greatest constitutional treatise ever compiled, expressed the opinion that "A dangerous ambition more often lurks behind the specious mask of zeal for the rights of the people than under the forbidding appearance of zeal for the firmness and efficiency of Government. History will teach us that the former has been found a much more certain road to the introduction of despotism than the latter, and that of those men who have overturned the liberties of republics the greatest number have begun their career by paying an obsequious court to the people; commencing as demagogues and ending tyrants." On January 13, 1837, Sir Robert Peel, who habitually couched his sentiments in moderate language, expressed a similar opinion in the course of a memorable address to the Conservatives of Glasgow: "If you give your

consent to measures which tend to the dissolution of existing institutions, what security have you that there will be any reaction at any future time? What security have you against proscriptions — against the creeping forth of men of a type not yet heard of in England,— what security have you against the ascendancy of blood-stained miscreants like Robespierre and Marat, *lusus naturæ* hitherto engendered, I am happy to say, in France alone, but from which no country can be protected if institutions congenial to its national character and hallowed by the lapse of ages are dissolved by violence or corrupted by fraud? You may rest assured that in every village a miscreant will arise to exercise a grinding tyranny by calling himself the People."

It is for this reason that no European State of any importance, except Great Britain, is prepared to surrender its destinies to the tender mercies of an omnipotent Single Chamber. In practically every civilised community the Second Chamber of the Legislature possesses co-ordinate authority with the popular Assembly; no fundamental changes can be carried out except in accordance with special provisions inserted in the Constitution to prevent the abuse of legislative power, and nowhere are more stringent safeguards to be found than in the democratic Constitutions of the United States and of the British Dominions in Canada, Australia, and South Africa. Upon what principle are the Radical Government justified in setting up a strong Second Chamber in South Africa, and destroying the powers of the Second Chamber in the Mother Country? The advocates of powerful Second Chambers, as Sir Henry Maine has pointed out, "do not assert that the decisions of a popularly elected Chamber are always or generally wrong. Their decisions are very often right. But it is impossible to be sure that they are right, and the more the difficulties of multitudinous government are probed, and the more carefully the influences acting upon it are examined, the stronger grows the doubt of the infallibility of popularly elected Legislatures. What, then, is expected from a well-constituted Second Chamber is not a rival infallibility, but an additional security. It is hardly too much to say that in this view almost any Second Chamber is better than none. . . . The conception of an Upper House as a mere revising Body, trusted with the privilege of dotting i's and crossing t's in measures sent up by the other Chamber, seems as irrational as it is poor. What is wanted from an Upper House is the security of its concurrence after full examination of the measures concurred in." Mr Asquith himself expressed a similar opinion at Newcastle on January 30, 1895. "If there are advantages—I am the last to deny that there are advantages—in the existence of a Second Chamber, they are the advantages which result from the existence of an

impartial, dispassionate, reviewing power, which will correct slovenliness, which will check dissipation, and which, in case of extreme need, will refer back to the people for consideration measures which the people cannot be supposed to have deliberately approved."

It may well be that in this country the Second Chamber will rest in the future upon an elective basis. At any rate, the hereditary qualification *per se* has been abandoned by every party in the State; but the composition of the Second Chamber is of little importance in comparison with its powers, and it is the foremost and paramount duty of Unionists to work for the restoration of a Second Chamber with authority co-ordinate with that possessed by the House of Commons. But there is only one way by which the Unionist Party will be able to accomplish the task which lies before them. The claim of the Radical Party to be "the Representatives of the People" (too long allowed to pass unchallenged) must be laid bare before the electors, and the People must be made to appreciate that it is only by repealing the Parliament Act that they will be able to regain control of their own destinies. If it is once realised that the Radical Government has deprived the electors of their right to effectually express their opinion in legislative matters, the end of the present Administration will be near at hand, and His Majesty's present advisers will receive their congé in the words used by Cromwell at the end of the Long Parliament: "You must go: the nation loathes your sitting." "In our day," wrote Sir Henry Maine, "when the extension of popular government is throwing all the older political ideas into utter confusion, a man of ability can hardly render a higher service to his country than by the analysis and correction of the assumptions which pass from mind to mind in the multitude, without inspiring a doubt of their truth and genuineness." Will the educated classes realise their duty in this matter, or will they remain immersed in selfishness and apathy, to their own undoing, and to the danger of the State? We shall see: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

ARTHUR PAGE.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

After six years of Radical misgovernment it is possible to perceive clearly the chaos and anarchy to which our poor country is reduced. The Cabinet is without discipline and without a united purpose. The Prime Minister accepts measures, in the hard positive spirit of an advocate, which he confesses to be dangerous for the community. He is still a lawyer speaking to his brief, or rather to half a dozen briefs. He possesses neither authority nor initiative. He is as little able to control his Chancellor of the Exchequer as he is to check the precipitancy of the Irish.

Of the Chancellor of the Exchequer it is difficult to speak with moderation. He is a new factor in British politics. He is a foreigner in mind and speech, without the smallest understanding of our institutions. A Welshman in the true sense of the word, he has made no study of England or the English. Scotland is as remote from his experience as the North Pole. A few tags of information, hastily gathered on a trip through Germany, a rough reading of the exploded heresies of Henry George, a knowledge, now happily failing him, of the tricks which catch votes, — these are the *curta supellex* of a man who aspires to control the finances of a great Empire. The result of putting a demagogue into the seat of a statesman is only too manifest. After years of peace prices are higher, we are more heavily taxed, Government securities are more profoundly depressed than ever within the memory of man. Despite years of prosperous trading, the feeling of national insecurity grows. The money which in happier days was invested at home, is now sent abroad for greater safety. The reproof publicly administered not long since to the Chancellor of the Exchequer is unique and well deserved. Never before has a responsible Minister of the Crown been thus severely handled. The Governor of the Bank of England pointed out to Mr Lloyd George, who is too busy speaking to learn the rudiments of his trade, that there is a solidarity in finance as in all other human activities. This lesson Mr Lloyd George is not likely to learn, as it is incompatible with his amiable method of making finance a pack-horse of class-hatred and revenge. As we all know, breweries and the land have during the last few years had heavy burdens laid upon them. They seemed to the Chancellor easy hen-roosts to rob, and as they are managed chiefly by Conservatives, an attack upon them involved neither a loss of votes nor a diminution in the Party's funds. But, as the Governor of the Bank of England said with inexorable logic, "you cannot injure one portion

of the community without the rest of the community suffering."

The Birkbeck Bank, for instance, stopped payment because its securities were suddenly and wantonly depreciated, and they were depreciated because Mr Lloyd George chose to forget that it is the business of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to lay aside his personal animosities and to think only of the good of the State. Nor was the ruin of the Birkbeck Bank a solitary exploit. Everywhere the small and large holder have suffered equally. There is not a bank in the country that has not felt the pinch. One instance, quoted by the Governor of the Bank of England, is worth remembrance. "A catastrophe on a large scale in the North of England," said he, "which would have affected the savings of a multitude of poor people and caused widespread distress, was with difficulty averted last August. Of course, I refer to a bank for small savings, which was drifting, had it not been assisted, into the same position as the Birkbeck Bank, owing to the depreciation in home investments." Here we see the rare and refreshing fruit ripe upon the tree. Mr Lloyd George, of course, is indifferent. He is indifferent also that Consols have fallen below 75, though even he would be stirred from his lethargy if he were asked to borrow money for the country on a large scale.

Meanwhile he cares not what happens. The Insurance Act, upon which, in a melodramatic speech delivered at some Tabernacle or other, he staked his existence, is passed, and is reputed to be working. Passed without discussion, closured, guillotined, and kangarooed into existence, it still keeps its provisions an inviolate secret. Peripatetic lecturers have failed to explain its benefits. The magnificent hotels which Mr Lloyd George promised the haunters of the Tabernacle are still so many castles in the air. Medical treatment is promised without doctors. The people must pay, we are told, and they are not likely to get any "consideration" for their payment. We quite agree with Mr Lloyd George that the National Insurance Act is not an Aladdin's Lamp. There was at least one passage in his joy-speech (word of ill omen!) which said no more than the truth. "You do not"—these were his very words,—"by rubbing it, call out palaces from the sky, with a retinue of servants, and doctors, and nurses, and everything ready." Precisely. Why, then, did Mr Lloyd George flatter his silly dupes with promises of hotels which he knew could not be kept? Why did he insist upon enforcing his Act without delay when no detail was prepared, — when no palace flashed from the sky, in spite of the rubbing of a thousand hands?

The reason is that Mr Lloyd George is in a hurry. As a vote-catcher the Insurance Bill has failed him, and he would, if

he could, pass from it to other measures for which he hopes a greater popularity. Meanwhile, he believes that his "imagination" will pull him through. Vain boast! Imagination is a quality, like honour, which no man should arrogate to himself. And surely none, save the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would mention imagination and Mr Lloyd George in the same sentence. Mr Lloyd George has many gifts. He is a master of that tawdry rhetoric which persuades the "spell-binder" of America, when gravelled for matter, to speak of the "ever-glades." The mist-laden valleys of his native land are always upon his tongue, without relevance and without excuse. He has not wholly surrendered the hills of Wales to that other staunch Welshman, Sir A. Mond. But in these cheap illusions there is no imagination. Had he been endowed with the true talent, Mr Lloyd George would have understood intuitively the scope, purpose, and effect of his Act. He would have known that compulsion is hateful in the eyes of Englishmen; that a measure made in Germany would have little chance of success in the free air of Britain. But having no imagination, living hungrily upon the foolish phrases he makes himself, he has plunged into a morass of difficulty from which no amount of native hills and mist-laden valleys will avail to rescue him.

The Home Secretary is a very close second to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the race of failure. He has handled the strike at the Docks in a miserable spirit of pusillanimity. As though the Trade Disputes Act were not enough to support the cause of injustice, he has wantonly discriminated in favour of the Unions, has declared that firms who go about their business in their own way are guilty of provocative action, and has left the neighbourhood of the Docks cruelly exposed to the brutality of "peaceful pickets." The Government, under his auspices, has made no attempt to enforce "the right to work," not when there is no work to be done, but even when work waits, and men are willing to do it. The peculiar virtues of Mr Tillett are not generally obvious. He is exalted by our Home Secretary above kings. He can do no wrong, and if he threatens those in authority, he is not even gently reproved. Great, indeed, is the power of organisation! In number the free labourers of England vastly surpass the Trade Unionists. But they are free men, and their vote is free. They cannot be driven into the ballot-boxes like slaves. Therefore they are not permitted to work where and when they will, and if they are kicked and robbed in the public street, it serves them right. Why do they not starve with their betters, and obey the bludgeoning argument of the peaceful picket?

In labour, as in finance, the triumph of anarchy is complete. And instead of attempting to restore peace to the

country, to make the rough places smooth, the Government has embarked upon many schemes of reckless legislation. For these it may not plead the mandate of the people. At bye-elections it is strangely silent of the benefits which it pretends to confer. It cannot but recognise the general apathy of the electors. Confronted by three revolutionary measures at once, how shall the voter, whose mind moves slowly, profess a vivid interest in them all? The Government cares not a jot for this apathy. It has dissociated itself entirely from the people. It has ceased to be representative in any sense of the word. It expends all its ingenuity in accommodating groups, and hopes to preserve itself in office by the simple bribery of exchanged measures. Wales supports Ireland with the prospect of favours to come, and thus a corruption far worse than any dreamt of by Walpole destroys the morals of the country.

Meanwhile, the bill for giving Home Rule to Ireland awaits the guillotine. The House of Commons, fearful of a reverse, has laid aside its labours earlier than it intended. Nor is there the smallest chance that, when it reassembles in October, it will give the Irish Bill a free, frank, and just discussion. The Prime Minister's one purpose will be to drive it through by all the means of tyranny which he has invented, and having satisfied the exactions of Mr Patrick Ford, to let the Empire take its chance. Fortunately for those who cannot tamely witness the dismemberment of the United Kingdom, the Irish difficulty will begin only when the Act asks to be administered. Infamous as it is to pass so large a measure of revolution as this without appealing to the country, it is still more infamous, without argument or excuse, to place the destinies of honest, law-abiding citizens beneath the heels of the Molly Maguires. It is evident to all that Ulster will not submit to the degradation which Mr Asquith has devised for her as the payment of eighty votes. There are certain tyrannies which cannot be fought at the hustings. When Charles I. carried his autocracy a step too far, he was met by Cromwell, with the county gentlemen of England behind him. The autocracy of our present Government is far meaner and far fiercer than the autocracy of Charles I. Charles, at any rate, had a loyal and patient belief in the divine right of kings. It must strain even Mr Asquith's sense of humour to put faith in the divine right of Mr Redmond or of Mr Devlin. Nor do we suppose that the spirit of England has changed vastly since the seventeenth century, and perhaps it is through Ulster that salvation will come to the country. In any case, the Irish Bill lives and moves in an atmosphere of unreality. Its pompous clauses will be discussed after an academic fashion. The opponents of the House of Lords will stand up one after another and sing the praises of a Second Chamber.

And nobody will take what they say too seriously. Those who have a spark of humour will not take it seriously themselves.

Disestablishment, also like Home Rule, is suspended between earth and heaven. It is neither passed nor rejected. It stands a worse chance even than Home Rule of adequate discussion. It lights no spark of faith; it awakens no enthusiasm. Not all the fairy stories of Mr Lloyd George concerning larders and sideboards can stir the pulses of its supporters. But it will go through the House of Commons, because the Treasury, having ceased to be the home of government, has become a clearing-house, where the demands of groups are honoured. Whether it will survive the ordeal of two years' veto we do not know. Perhaps it is not intended to survive it. Perhaps the Government, having fulfilled in the Commons all its "obligations," will contrive a fall before any of its monstrous measures are ripe. But certain it is that of all its experiments the disendowing of the Welsh Church inspires least confidence in its begetters. They speak of it somewhat furtively. They are perplexed what to do with the money, when they shall have stolen it. To rob a poor man is not considered a gracious act by any save the Trade Unionists of the East End, and our Radical Government, when it has sated the malice of Nonconformists, will be at a loss how to apply the pilfered funds of the Church. However, that is their affair, and they must drag themselves out of a squalid situation as best they may.

And now, as though these enterprises were not enough for the guillotine, the Radicals have determined upon the course, which is always nearest to their hearts, of gerrymandering the suffrage. In order to make sure their return after the next General Election, they have devised a franchise bill whose only object is to make them "tenants for life." The bill is shamefully and shamelessly partisan. It pretends to abolish "anomalies," as though anomalies had not been the life-blood of our constitution. Its real purpose is to abolish as many Tory voters as possible. Whether we shall have womanhood as well as manhood suffrage depends upon the taste and fancy of the members. Mr Asquith has renounced the task of guidance, and so long as they consent with proper alacrity to the slaughter of Tories, he does not care what his colleagues do. It is his opinion that the sudden enfranchisement of many millions of women will be a danger to the State. Rather than risk a dispute, says he, let them be added. We suppose, like Mr M'Kenna, he thinks that it is no business of his to ward off dangers from the State. Perhaps he has done his duty when he has conciliated his groups of henchmen, and cut down the list of Tory voters.

Of the anomalies which he proposes to abolish the chief are plural voting and University representation. In favour of

plural voting there is a great deal to be said. We live under what Aristotle called a democracy of the fifth class, in which only the lowest bear sway. The wise and good, the able and well-educated, are completely and utterly disfranchised. Their votes, until the revolution comes, will not decide the fate of any election. They pay the taxes, they do the work of the country, and for their pains they are unrepresented in the councils of the State. It was the advantage of plural voting —not an excessive advantage —that it did a very little to redress the balance. But Mr Asquith and his friends care not who supports them. The respect of the good and wise is nothing to them. It is heads they want, not brains. And so the plural voter stands in their way; and though he be not, like millions of women, a danger to the State, he must be ruthlessly suppressed.

The representation of universities, one would have thought, needed no defence. It is worth preserving, merely because it is there. It has made possible the aid of many scholars —such as Sir Richard Jebb, Mr Butcher, and Sir William Anson—who without it would never have sat and spoken at Westminster. The anomaly, if anomaly it be, is gracious and trivial; and surely any party that was not blinded by the mad fury of partisanship might have spared half a dozen distinguished opponents, when it knew that it started in the game with a clear lead of eighty Irishmen. The argument which Mr Asquith employed to justify the suppression of the University seats does credit neither to his intelligence nor to his sense of humour. "Take my own University of Oxford," said he. . . . "I took my degree. I was for some years a Fellow of my College. . . . I have never had a vote for the University, and have not one now. Why? . . . Because I was not then in a position, and have never since been tempted to incur the otiose expenditure of, I think, something like £20." Mr Asquith's position is, we believe, unique and disgraceful. We do not suppose that there exists another graduate who, being a Fellow of his College, has resolutely refused to take his M.A. degree. It is idle to plead that he was too poor. He was not too poor when he was receiving the emoluments of a fellowship. A university does not live on the reflected glory of its alumni. They also must pay their *τροφεῖα*; and that Mr Asquith, owing all to Oxford, should decline to pay its fees, and then make his refusal a reason for abolishing University representation, is a piece of cynicism which will not escape the eye even of the Labour Party.

For the rest, the Radicals lightened the debate with a jest after their own heart. "We intend," said Mr Harcourt, "and we hope that the Opposition will believe, although we do not expect they will believe, to have redistribution before the next General Election." Why should he hope? And if

he hoped, why should he not expect? He knows the record of the Government in the way of truth. He has not forgotten the Prime Minister's "debt of honour." The reform of the House of Lords, which will not "brook delay," is still in his mind. Why, then, should he hope to trick the Opposition a second time? To use this damaged form of words is merely to convict himself of an inane gravity. Could he smile, nothing would have persuaded him to plead so foolish an excuse. From the moment that he refused to put a clause into the Bill undertaking that it should not come into operation without a measure of redistribution, all the world knew that his assertion was meaningless and insincere. To such a pitch has politics brought us that a promise made by the Government bench is received with loud and continuous laughter. But what matters it? The arch mountebank of all is preparing a surprise. He is angry at the ill-success of his Insurance Act. He lives on popularity and votes, as a chameleon lives on air. He will languish utterly if the general applause do not echo in his ear. A packed meeting, with every ticket-holder accounted for, is a better solace to his soul than no meeting at all. But he loves best to be pointed at in the street as one who robbed Paul to pauperise Peter. So the song of the land has been stuffed into the throats of a thousand raucous gramophones, and serves the empty heads for argument. If the world did not know Mr Lloyd George there might be votes in this antic. Even now for the ignorant it is a danger. The land demands a subtler management and more faithful toil than the factories of monopolists. And if Mr Lloyd George gave it to the people, what could the people do with it? The transfer might assuage the malice of the envious. It would send the land out of cultivation. To ask the people, whatever that word means, to take over the land, and still to burden the people with the weight of free trade, is not merely folly but criminal folly. It could have but one issue—the ruin of people and land. And perhaps, if this object were achieved, Mr Lloyd George might be sated at last.

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CONTENTS.

Omar, the Policeman of Beyrout, . . . 295

With the Abor Expeditionary Force. By Wanderer, 311

Shipwrecked. By George Forbes, F.R.S., . . 322

In Quest of a Cure.—III. In the Midi, . . . 344

A Tight Place. By Sir Hugh Clifford, K.C.M.G., . 352

Hocken and Hunken. A Tale of Troy. XIV.-XVII. By "Q.," 361

A Satyric Drama of Sophocles. By A. S. Hunt, . 389

Musings without Method, ... 399

Mr Winston Churchill's Versatility — "Violence" and Bad "Citizens"—A Constitutional People—Robert Southey—His False Impression of Himself—An Overweening Conceit—His Excellent Work and Character—A History of Prose Rhythm —Professor Saintsbury's Ingenious Thesis — An Anthology of Prose — The Ancients' Love of Nature — Sir Archibald Geikie's Treatise.

The Truth about the Republic in China, . . 413

The Land and the People, ... 418

In Memoriam: Andrew Lang, ... 425

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OMAR, THE POLICEMAN OF BEYROUT.

"If I were not Alexander, I would be Diogenes."

A quaint conceit that of the all-conquering Macedonian. To change his truly magnificent personality, if for any other, then for that of a cynic philosopher who, living in one sort of a tub, had probably never tasted the luxury of the other, and apparently had not a civil remark to pass to a neighbour!

Personally, although I admit that a good many things in my position might bear improvement, I should be reluctant to barter away my own personality for that of anybody else, for fear that I might, after all, find that I had made a bad bargain. For I seem to remember that Damocles sat uncomfortably on the seat of Dionysius, that Abou Hassan's temporary exchange of places with the Caliph was not altogether successful, and that Sancho Panza was only too willing to resign the governorship of Barataria and return to his old position of squire to Don Quixote.

A man's own weaknesses, deficiencies, anxieties, and wants he presumably knows; he can only make a bare guess at his neighbour's. The Duke, for example, whose rent-roll and position I am at times tempted to envy, may, for all that I know to the contrary, have a skeleton in his family cupboard or be a martyr to chronic attacks of toothache or indigestion.

Still, I found myself wondering the other day who or what I would choose to be, if it were a law of nature that at the end of a fixed period a man should be compelled to relinquish his own and take upon himself a new personality. A sea-gull, then, before all things, as being a bird that seems to have more friends and fewer enemies than most, that may be said to command three elements —earth, air, and water,—to live a happy, devil-may-care existence, and not to be over

particular about the quality of its food. A male of that species, I need hardly add, as the trouble of laying and the responsibility of hatching eggs would act as drags upon an otherwise unfettered life.

Were I, however, compelled to retain my humanity, then, if I were not myself, I would be Omar, the policeman of Beyrout.

The policeman in Beyrout, be it said, is by no means a negligible quantity, and his office — that is, if he really does his duty — is anything but a sinecure. For Beyrout, with all its beauty, is an evil place to live in, and, in common with a good many other towns on the Levantine coast, is little more or less than a hotbed of iniquity. There is, of course, quite a large respectable element in the teeming population; but on the other hand it is a place where all forms of blackguardism and rascality are rife — a den of thieves where sinners from all nations congregate. True, the Syrian inhabitants are, or at any rate if left to themselves might be, more or less inoffensive; and there is a fair sprinkling of American, English, and German merchants and traders who carry on their business quietly under difficult circumstances. But unfortunately Greece and Italy, Turkey and Bulgaria, Egypt and Armenia seem, or seemed a few years back, to regard Beyrout as a sort of conveniently situated rubbish-heap whereon all that was unsavoury or undesirable might with impunity be dumped down. And the rubbish thus dumped down accumulates, and goes on accumulating, with the result that the seashore and back-streets of the town are inhabited by the greatest set of ruffians imaginable — men to whom murder only ceases to be a fine art because it is so commonly practised; women who only fall short of being Messalinas or Cleopatras because comeliness and opportunity for sin on an imperial scale are denied to them. Have I exaggerated? I think not. Driving with a friend one Friday morning along the seashore on our way to the Lebanon for a week's end, I saw a large and enthusiastic crowd, and heard loud shouts and revolver shots—the sound of which I had grown accustomed to associate with jubilation by day and violence by night.

"What is the kick-up?" I asked my friend, who, being an English resident in the town, might be expected to be better informed than myself.

"I've no idea; but I'll find out when we come back. I can ask my clerk—he is sure to know."

And the clerk's tale, as repeated to me on the Monday night, was simply this. The crowd, the cheering, the revolver shots were so many greetings to the "boss Mussulman murderer" of the district on his triumphant return from a two years' deportation to Rhodes. It appeared that the

fellow was known to have been implicated in the murder at various times of no less than seven Christians. But "dead men tell no tales," and the loss of an odd Christian or two sits lightly on the conscience of the rulers of Beyrout. When, however, an eighth attempt had resulted in a non-suit, or, in other words, the intended victim had only been wounded instead of killed, and might therefore be expected to lodge a complaint at the British Consulate, a strong hint was conveyed to the disappointed hero that for two years to come his room would be more welcome in Beyrout than his company, and Rhodes was recommended as a pleasant place of residence. Now, however, his banishment was over, and he was at liberty to take up his interrupted career.

Again, in the course of a brief visit to Cyprus, I came across a Scotsman fresh from Beyrout. "Mon," he said to me, "yon is an awfoo place. There were sax men murdered there on Saturday night, an' so I came away." In point of fact, I believe that only five men had been actually murdered, the sixth victim being the murderer himself, who had run amuck with a revolver, and had been eventually shot down by the police.

A story that I heard of the awful cruelty practised by some women on another member of the sex will not bear repetition.

Plenty of scope, then, for police work, and it may be added, plenty of policemen to do it. Unfortunately, where to over-police such a place would be impossible, the sufficiency of the police protection to the would-be respectable citizen, both in Beyrout and elsewhere, commonly depends even more on the quality than on the quantity of the policemen.

Under-policed, then? Possibly so, but in the background—to him who knew the ropes—there always lay the possibility of an appeal unto Omar. Nominally by no means the Chief of the Police, though I fancy that he had reached a grade corresponding to that of our Inspector, Omar to the Englishman in Beyrout really and truly personified what Mr Grummer once claimed to personify in Ipswich: "law, civil power, and exekative."

Here, however, I must interpolate a few words as to what were nominally the two great powers in Beyrout—the Vali, and the Chief of the Police. The Vali, then, or Governor, a Turk, of course, rules a Levantine town or province on a strictly Turkish principle,—Turkish indeed, yet by no means original, as being borrowed from Rome. Verres, Pontius Pilate, and others practised it when the world was some two thousand years younger. First catch your hare, and then cook it. The hare, or in other words, the governorship, is, or—as things may have been altered under the *régime* of the "Young Turks"—used to be, captured by the employment of wholesale bribery at Constantinople. Not

the best man for the office, but the highest bidder, was appointed Vali. Then followed in due course the recouping process. "For a great sum purchased I this province. How am I to repay myself?" So may have reasoned, we may suppose, the Proconsul in the time of the Roman Emperor, or the keeper of an English turnpike in the early Victorian days. So reasoned a Vali in Syria a few years ago. True—the province was expected to yield something to the Ottoman treasury. But there had to be a substantial something for the Vali too. And so—for lighting, for cleansing, for watering their towns and so forth, the wretched inhabitants were heavily taxed, and the taxes or rates having been duly exacted, the lighting, cleansing, and watering were for the most part left to take care of themselves, while the preservation of internal order was intrusted to the Chief of the Police and his satellites. The Chief of the Police, and indeed I might add the Vali, I never clapped eyes on during some six months' residence in Beyrout. But I heard a strange tale about a quondam holder of the former title, to the effect that he had acquired it by the simple process of shooting his predecessor in office during the course of a street row. The line taken by the authorities was apparently this. "We want a strong man," they argued, "and he must be handy with his revolver; here is the very man for the post." And, the narrator added, he kept the town in better order than any chief of the police before him or after him.

Judged solely by the number of men under his control, the Chief of the Police should have been a very important functionary; judged by the general condition of the town, he was lamentably inefficient. Whether his underlings did much work at night I was in no position to judge. For streets, which were seldom lighted, haunted by legions of dogs which chose to lie in the most inconvenient places conceivable, and were well warranted to snap at the wayfarer who stumbled over them in the dark, afforded few temptations towards night wanderings, while the sound of occasional revolver shots suggested that indoors was the safest place. Certainly, however, the idea that the policemen found plenty to do in the night time was fostered by their comatose condition during the hours of the day. Then, instead of moving about themselves, and bidding other people to "move on" after the manner of our English police, they were to be seen sitting in groups round and about the guard-houses, sometimes talking, more often dozing. Whether they were in this attitude of ease a source of terror to the evil-doer is a point on which I may be allowed to be sceptical, but there is no manner of doubt that they were often a source of considerable anxiety to the innocent wayfarer. For the policeman—from his looks I should say a Syrian recruit—was armed with a rifle, and as

he sat back on his bench with eyes closed, the weapon lying across his legs and his fingers in dangerous proximity to the trigger, it was impossible to resist the conviction that a slip on the hard seat, a sudden start, or any uneasy dream, might result in a bullet flying practically anywhere. When my worthy friend Dr B., a highly respected and universally popular resident of some forty years' standing, was unpleasantly surprised by the arrival through his study window of a bullet, which, traversing the apartment about head-high, lodged in the opposite wall, no one for a moment suspected that the dear old gentleman had been the intended victim of a daylight outrage, but by common consent the unlooked-for visitation was put down to the credit of a sleepy or careless protector of the public, who had let off his rifle by mistake. For fear of a repetition of the performance the doctor reported the matter to the Vali. Intense was the great man's indignation. That a subject of his English Majesty—be it said that in those days the presence of a strong English fleet in the Mediterranean accentuated from the Vali's point of view the gravity of the position—should have been thus wantonly menaced in Beyrout! Altogether intolerable! An example must be made.

"How many Mussulmans shall I arrest for this unspeakable outrage, Dr B.?" inquired the Vali, at once converting a stray bullet into a question of creeds. The doctor hurriedly explained that there was no necessity whatever for so drastic a measure,—that he had no quarrel to pick with the followers of Mahomet, and believed the shot to have been fired by accident. All that he requested was that a little more care should be exercised in the use of firearms. But the zeal of the Vali, who thought that he had got hold of a really good thing, was in no way abated. It was so simple a matter to arrest a score or so of Mussulmans, and for the victims, too, the doors of the prison could so easily be opened, provided, of course, that a certain amount of redemption money found its way into the pocket of the Vali.

"At least," he said, "I must have all the men who live in the houses opposite to your window arrested and examined."

Whether the arrest and the examination ever took place I am not prepared to say, but a shrewd guess might be hazarded that if Dr B., as it happened, was none the worse for the mishap, the Vali, from a pecuniary point of view, was materially the better. True, it may not have been a policeman, after all, who fired the shot, but I have given the story as an illustration of what the wayfarer in Beyrout was always expecting to happen, and what possibly, or even probably, did happen on the occasion.

But where is Omar all this time? I seem to have left him in the background, by no means a suitable position for

so versatile a character. For never was one and the same individual more ubiquitous, or more certain to be found in the right place when the necessity for finding him arose. I seem to see him now, striding down the street, a truly magnificent figure of a man. Taller than most, but with so grandly filled-out a frame that no one would at the first glance have suspected him of standing well over six feet, carrying little superfluous flesh—for no one who is constantly on the move in Beyrout is likely to be carrying much of this commodity — by reason of breadth of shoulder and depth of chest, Omar must have weighed nearer fifteen than fourteen stone, and would have been a treasure-trove to a sculptor in search of a model for his Hercules. A really fine face, surmounted by a thick crop of black curly hair, accorded suitably with the grand and striking figure. Strong of mind as well as of body, good to behold, pleasant for the friend, terrible for the evildoer to encounter. Such was Omar, the policeman of Beyrout. Being always dressed in spotless white, with red tarboosh and cummerbund, he used to appeal to me as the best turned-out man in the town; and though he was never to be seen carrying a rifle like the ordinary policeman, he was not only reported of as being a deadly shot with either rifle or revolver, but was known to have in his possession, and probably on his person, the most serviceable weapon of the latter type that had ever found its way to Beyrout,—a Webley of the latest and most approved pattern. Theoretically I believe the revolver was the property of the Waterworks Company, but to all practical purposes it was the private asset of their Kavass, Omar, who jealously kept in his own possession the purchase for which he had been originally responsible. The story ran that the revolver had belonged to an English naval officer, who, when the English fleet paid a visit to Beyrout, had shown it to Omar, and invited him to find a purchaser. The bargain was soon struck. Having tested the weapon and found it entirely to his liking, Omar strode off to the Waterworks, interviewed the manager, and briefly informed him that it was the obvious duty of the Company to seize the golden opportunity of properly arming their Kavass. And as Omar was worth his weight in gold to the Waterworks, the Company paid over the money, and Omar kept the revolver. Thenceforth what Kill-deer was in the hands of Hawk-Eye to the ordinary trapper's rifle, that, and something more than that, the Webley in Omar's custody was reputed to be as compared with the trumpery revolvers so often seen or heard in Beyrout.

Not, however, on his grand presence, or even on the possession of the Webley, so much depended the admirability of the man as on the extraordinary position he had attained in the

community. It is no exaggeration to say that Omar in Beyrout stood to the Padishah, or whatever be the powers that frame the laws which govern the Ottoman Empire, much in the same position as Mahomet stood to Allah. Nominally the servant of the law, he interpreted it so as to suit at once the instant emergency and his own convenience, using it in fact much as an Englishman uses his aquascutum,—sheltering himself under its protection if the necessity for so doing arises, hanging it up in the hall, or packing it away in a trunk when not required. If the law itself, like the aquascutum, was often kept in the background, and still more often unintelligible to the majority of a vast population, Omar's interpretation or version of it, as applied to particular cases, carried almost a greater weight than the Koran, being at all times backed up by those qualifications essential to the success of a ruler of unruly men—physical strength, promptitude of action, imperturbability of demeanour, and sound common-sense. I seem to remember that in Xenophon a boy-judge was blamed for giving a decision based on common-sense rather than on abstract justice. A big boy had a little coat and a little boy had a big coat, and when the big boy effected a forcible exchange, the boy-judge, so to speak, legalised the transaction. So might Omar have done if the incident had occurred in Beyrout, with the distinction that the tribunal of public opinion would have held him blameless.

"Has A. said so? Then it will be," once remarked a great German doctor to me when a strong-minded but well-trusted subordinate had gone her own gate in distinct contravention of an order he had given.

"Has Omar said? Then it will be." So echoed the *vox populi* in Beyrout, practically allotting to a subordinate official that which in reality he held, — a position of irresponsible autocracy. An extraordinary point in Omar's favour was that, so far from abusing his position, he seemed to satisfy and commend himself to both parties in a quarrel, so deftly tempering justice with mercy and mercy with justice that both the person wronged and the wrong-doer went on their way rejoicing: for where the latter came off cheaper on the whole than he might have had reason to expect, the former was left with the satisfactory feeling that he had carried his point and obtained a conviction. Again, where the nature of the case called for instant and drastic measures, there was no suspicion of lameness in the punishment meted out by Omar,—no reference or appeal to any authority nominally higher than his own. Like Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, he executed judgment with his own hand, and a few applications of the whip, the only visible emblem of his authority, wielded by Omar's nervous arm, might be war-

ranted to give complete satisfaction to both plaintiff and defendant in the action, the former being the witness and the latter the recipient of the bounty. "Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?" Few men indeed in Beyrout, and it was commonly accepted in that polyglot town that Omar's lash was never known to fall on otherwise than guilty shoulders.

Wholly apart, however, from his purely judicial functions, Omar represented in his own person the whole staff, administration, and financial arrangements of a very complete and efficient Insurance Company, whose policy may fairly have been said to cover the sanitary risks of the clients. I do not for a moment profess to assert that had I died of typhoid fever—a by no means improbable result of inhaling the multiform odours of Beyrout—my executors could have lodged any claim against Omar. So far as he was concerned, death not only "covered all faults" but closed all accounts. But to the living clients, at all events, he afforded far more instant and efficient protection than any Sanitary Board or Inspector of Nuisances that I ever had dealings with in England, no idea of red tape being taken into calculation or allowed to interfere with his methods. There were plenty of contingencies to be insured against in Beyrout, and the joy of it was that one policy covered them all, and was never allowed to lapse through inadvertence. Here in England it is my pleasure to believe that I am pretty amply secured by a series of insurances, but the process of so securing myself is at once cumbrous and expensive, and one that entails not only a certain amount of correspondence, but a succession of taxes on the memory as well as the purse. At Beyrout, on the contrary, by the simple act of payment to Omar of one medjidi—roughly three shillings and sixpence—a-month, I was practically assured of peace and comfort in my temporary abode, or in other words was able—*pace* always mosquitos and sandflies—to sleep soundly at night, and in the day-time to enjoy on my house-top or in my room immunity from both beggars and effluvia.

Sundry and aggravating to a degree were the sounds likely to disturb the sleeper in Beyrout during the small hours of the night. The buzzing of mosquitos was of course an inseparable accident of life in the East. Apart from this, the principal disturbing elements were briefly these: the incessant braying of an amorous or hungry ass, the barking of an uneasy street dog, the constantly recurring crack of a revolver, the droning of an Arab who seemed to imagine that it was a matter of necessity for the night to be "filled with music." Omar's retaining-fee, supplemented on extra-special occasions by a modest refresher, covered all these risks. The ass's owner was briefly warned that he, and

not the ass, would have a taste of Omar's whip if the animal did not mend its ways; the street dog was identified, and "presented with a piece of meat," a local euphemism for poisoning with strychnine; to the sharpshooter or serenader it was suggested that the vicinity of one of Omar's clients was a wholly unsuitable place for the practising either of revolver-shooting or any form of vocal or instrumental music.

Beggardom is apparently a recognised institution in Beyrout,—even more so than in Ireland. Main points of difference between the Syrian and the Irish beggar are these: where both are, each after his own fashion, equally insistent, the Irish beggar is the more fluent and plausible as well as the more ragged of the pair, but even so he is far less offensive, both to eye and nose, than his Syrian brother of the order. Moreover, the Irishman commonly attacks the wayfarer in the street only, or at least it may be said that his house-to-house visitation commonly extends only to the back door. The Syrian, on the other hand, neither by your leave nor with your leave, marches boldly in, and as if by prerogative right establishes himself in the most comfortable chair, when, by virtue either of his privileges as a *bonâ-fide* beggar, or of his possession of an either real or well-made-up skin disease, no amount of persuasion will dislodge him unless it is accompanied by a donation. An attempt at forcible ejection is more likely to end disastrously for the host than for the unwelcome and unsavoury visitor, who may be warranted to yell, bite, kick, scratch, and spit, even if he does not go to the length of producing a knife; while the wrath of Allah, a most complaisant deity if he fulfils all the prayers and desires of his suppliants, is freely invoked upon the person and the lineage of the oppressor. An awkward customer, then, to tackle, the Syrian beggar? Undoubtedly so—to the uninitiated or uninsured! But — for in the East, as in our own land, the beggar tribe doubtless have some method of informing one another where intrusion may, and where it may not, be practised with advantage to the intruder—the knowledge that a resident in Beyrout, whether temporary or permanent, had sought safety under the ægis of Omar served as an effectual warning to keep clear of the premises. For he who had once endured a chastisement at the hands of that terrible Turk was not by way of being in a hurry to forget it, or wilfully to provoke a repetition.

Let me give two examples of Omar's methods of procedure.

Into my room one morning, while I was finishing my breakfast, there arrived an English resident in Beyrout, one M. P.

"I have had rather an awkward experience in the night," he began his tale. "I am rather a sound sleeper, and one of these filthy Arabs footed it up the wall by the

pipe, and climbed into my room. Barefooted, of course—you can see the marks of his pads all the way up the wall. Well, he looted my watch and chain, and pouched all the money there was. Quite a lot, too, for I had just cashed a cheque."

"How much?" I asked.

"Six or seven pounds. Nearer seven than six, I reckon, though I can't be sure to a shilling or two. Anyhow, he took the lot." And with that he lighted a cigarette, and puffed away as if the loss of a watch and chain and some seven pounds were a matter of no consequence.

"What are you going to do?" I inquired.

"Oh! I shall go and tell Omar, of course—I shall catch him at the Waterworks at ten o'clock. It will be all right. Hulloa! it's a quarter to ten now—I must be off. I'll look in on my way back."

An hour or so later he returned, and informed me that in company with Omar he had been making a round of the principal jewellers' shops in Beyrout, and had learned that the watch had already been offered for sale in no less than three quarters, that Omar had identified the would-be vendor by the jewellers' description, and had now gone in quest of him. At about half-past one, as we were finishing our lunch, there came a single peremptory rap at the door, and in strode Omar.

"Watch and chain," he briefly announced, depositing the articles on the table. "You shall have the money to-morrow." And on the following morning the money was handed over to P.

"And what will the fellow get?" I inquired of the latter.

"The fellow? The thief, you mean. Oh, nothing!"

"But aren't you going to prosecute?"

"Not I! What's the good of prosecuting here? If the fellow were locked up, he'd only have to bribe one of these policemen to let him out again. And where would Omar come in? Of course I gave Omar a bit, and the other fellow will have to give him a bit more. But if you tried to lock up every thief in Beyrout, there wouldn't be jails enough to hold them. Besides, I've got my stuff back all right, and I shouldn't be surprised if the Arab's shoulders are rather sore. Anyhow, Omar will keep an eye on him."

The two things that impressed me most about the transaction were, in the first place, P.'s absolute confidence in Omar's power to recover the stolen property, and in the second place, the promptitude with which Omar had wound up the business. The thief had certainly been admonished and fined, possibly thrashed into the bargain, P. had got his property back at the cost of a small percentage, and Omar had levied a moderate tax upon both parties in payment of a morning's work, while barring myself, P., and perhaps an odd man or two to whom he told the story, no one in Beyrout was any the wiser.

Immoral, perhaps, but sound! In England, P. would certainly under the most favourable conditions have lost the money, and probably his watch and chain as well, and after having been put to the trouble of appearing against the thief in a police court, might by way of compensation have obtained a conviction, and the barren consolation of knowing that a knave would remain under lock and key for some time to come—a poor set-off indeed against the loss of some fifteen or twenty pounds.

Here again is Omar in the character of Sanitary Inspector and Insurance Agent. There was in Beyrout in those days an enterprising and clever young Englishman, W., who was driving a thriving trade in "American Dentistry." No man worked harder than W. in the recognised working hours of the day, and the amount of teeth that he either extracted or doctored within the space of twenty-four hours would have fairly staggered an ordinary practitioner. Once in a way—not often, it is to be hoped—he obtained a little surreptitious and entirely unsolicited assistance. For one morning, as he opened his surgery, there rushed into the room a stout Mussulman with a much swollen face and a remarkably short temper. His choice of language, as, plumping himself down into the patient's chair and opening his mouth, he peremptorily ordered W. to get to his work, did not commend itself to that singularly independent individual, who promptly bade the follower of Mahomet to leave the surgery, and betake himself either to the devil or to "the fool of a dentist who had made such a mess of his mouth."

"But it was you!" fairly screamed the Mussulman, and as W., anxious to refute the imputation, condescended to look at the offending tooth, lo and behold! there, exposed to view, was—damning piece of evidence—some of his own private and most treasured form of stopping. Mutual explanations ensued, and it was elicited that the Mussulman, who did not know W. by sight, but had only heard of his skill as an operator, had visited the surgery on the previous evening, while W.'s Arab boy—aged perhaps thirty—was clearing up after the day's work, had been experimented upon by that enterprising individual, and had gone away the poorer by a medjidi, and the richer by a truly excruciating toothache, the natural result of having patent stopping hammered upon an exposed nerve.

"And what did you do to the boy?" I inquired, when he told me the story.

"Fined him a fortnight's wages."

"But didn't he object?"

"Well, no. You see, he preferred that to being handed over to Omar."

All this, however, is by way of digression. To return to my story. I have explained that W. was a consistently hard worker. But there is a time in the day, roughly speaking from half-past twelve to three,

when no man who is anxious to preserve his health thinks of working in Beyrout. In the summer months the moist heat during the middle of the day is so enervating as to be well-nigh intolerable. During what —to borrow a phrase from the cricket-field—may be termed "the interval," it was W.'s custom to lie at ease under an awning on the top of his house, alternately dozing and reading. Chancing one day to wake from his first sleep somewhere about one o'clock, he found his nostrils assailed by a truly infernal smell, so pernicious in its character that he hurriedly called his Arab boy and sent him off post-haste to make inquiries as to the cause of the unwelcome visitation. Shortly it transpired that a dirty little Jew who lived on the opposite side of the road, some hundred yards lower down, was employing "the interval" by emptying what might well have been the contents of a cesspool into the street gutter, and as the wind was blowing straight from the Jew's house towards W.'s, the latter was receiving the full benefit of the odour resultant on the transaction. A polite but firmly worded note to the Jew only provoked a rude verbal message from the latter, who was only too glad to have annoyed a Christian, to the effect that if W. objected to the smell he was heartily welcome to turn to and purify the gutter. And then W. did what he told me he had never done either before or since in Beyrout—walked, that is, the best part of a mile in the hottest hour of the day, roused Omar from his siesta, and laid the facts of the case before him.

"It's a very urgent matter, Omar," he explained, emphasising the importance of the question by presenting the protector of the poor with a medjidi.

"In five minutes," was the laconic answer; and W., who hurried home to see the game played out, had hardly resumed his seat on the house-top, an excellent vantage-post for seeing as well as smelling, when Omar, with his whip slung over his shoulder, marched down to the street.

"Well," said W., "I saw him rap at the Jew's door, and the Jew half-opened it, and peeped out. Have you ever seen a keeper pull a ferreted rabbit out of a hole? That *is* just how that dirty little Jew came out. Omar put in one great paw, caught him in the middle of the back, and landed him on the pavement with a jerk that must have shaken up every tooth in his head."

And then, under the "peaceful persuasion" of Omar's whip, the Jew for the next hour was actively employed in swilling and thoroughly purifying the gutter for the entire length of the street, the slightest appearance of slackness being rewarded by a resounding thwack of the taskmaster's whip. When the work had been completed to Omar's entire satisfaction, the Jew, more dead than alive, crawled submissively back into his kennel, while Omar, halting in front of W.'s house, saluted, and

inquired if W. had any further wishes.

"Well, Omar," suggested the latter, who felt that the enemy had not yet been wounded in the tenderest point, "it is a very warm day. I got very hot walking to your house, and you must have been very hot watching the Jew. I think he ought to pay money."

Without a word, Omar marched back to the Jew's door, and announced his presence by a peremptory tap with his whip. But this time the Jew was not to be drawn. Only his head appeared from an upper window, whence he carried on a dialogue with Omar standing in the street. Presently the head was withdrawn, and a hand kept alternately appearing and disappearing, while small coins, two or three at a time, were showered on to the pavement.

"I don't suppose there were more than two or three shillings' worth," concluded W. "You can bet they were all métalliques, but the Jew hated parting. Anyhow, it was a nice little haul for Omar, and the gutter was never so clean before."

It was only on the occasion of my departure from Beyrout that I availed myself of Omar's good offices. Had I known the ropes better, I should doubtless have invoked his assistance. As it was, he volunteered to see the last of me, and did me yeoman service. Some weeks before, acting under sound advice, I had enrolled myself as one of his clients, and now and again he had paid a visit to my lodging, and there, over a cup of coffee and a cigarette, had discoursed upon the current topics of the day. From some outside source he had learned of my impending departure, and on the morning before I sailed he paid me one of his rare visits.

"You go away from Beyrout to-morrow?"

"Yes, Omar, I am off."

"What ship you go?"

"*Belgian Prince.*"

"Ah! a good ship—she is in the harbour now. What time you go?"

"About six in the evening."

"Ah! six in the evening you go. Then I shall come and see you off." And with that he took his departure.

"That's all right!" remarked a friendly resident, to whom in the course of conversation I happened to mention that Omar had volunteered to see me off. "He will save you a lot of money and annoyance."

"How so?" I asked.

"Oh, you'll see. In lots of ways."

"I suppose I shall have to pay him."

"Two francs, nothing more. It's a sort of recognised fee. He always sees an Englishman off, if Cook's lot don't get hold of him beforehand."

Some thirty hours later my friend's predictions were amply verified, and I had good cause to realise the value of Omar's presence in an emergency. The ordinary fare for an arabyeh—a two-horsed victoria—from any part of the town of Beyrout to the quay is one bishlik, rather less than

sixpence. But a passenger with luggage is content to pay an additional half bishlik, and the arabyeh is only warranted to carry one or two packages. As I had a fair, though by no means an excessive, amount of baggage, I had thought it advisable to secure two conveyances, and I started for the quay in the first with a single portmanteau, leaving my little Syrian landlady, who was very anxious to see me off, to follow in the second with the rest of my belongings. Unfortunately the two drivers, aware that they had to deal with a stranger, had evidently conspired beforehand to demand seven bishliks apiece, and in default to "raise hell"—in other words, to collect a crowd of the truly awful villains who herded on the sea-shore, and might be warranted so to abuse, hustle, and possibly assault the intending traveller that he would be only too ready to compound with the contents of his purse for immunity of life and limb. When, therefore, my portmanteau and I had been duly deposited on the quay, and I offered the driver a bishlik and a half, he rudely demanded seven bishliks, and on my declining to assent to the imposition began to shout, or rather scream, by way of rallying to his assistance all "true believers." In an instant I found myself the centre of a crowd of as evil-looking scoundrels as the vilest slum of either London or Birmingham might be expected to produce, and matters looked distinctly ominous. Another instant and the crowd had dispersed almost as rapidly as it had assembled, and I was alone on the pavement with the arabyeh driver and—Omar, who had apparently dropped from the clouds, and looked, as indeed he invariably did, as spruce as if he had just been turned out of a bandbox, and perfectly cool and collected.

"That your arabyeh?" he inquired, accosting me as if I were a perfect stranger.

"Yes, Omar."

"How much you give that man?"

"I offered him a bishlik and a half, and he wanted seven."

"Give him now a bishlik and a half," and then, as the driver's hand closed on the coin, "and I give him this."

All I can say is, that if the pain of the crack that fell on the knave's back could in any way be gauged by the sound, there was no manner of doubt that full representative value had been received for those extra bishliks. The fellow waited for no more. With a loud yell he leapt into the driving-seat, and whipping up his horses galloped down the road for dear life. As the second arabyeh in due course hove into sight Omar modestly retired into the background, as though anxious to see how I would handle the position by myself. I made the same tender as before, only to be encountered by the same rude demand for seven bishliks. But the yell prepared for my brief refusal died away on the man's lips as he caught sight of Omar quietly advancing

and fingering his whip. Almost snatching the coins out of my hand, the fellow sprang to his seat and levanted. After this experience I wisely concluded to leave the further arrangements for my exit in Omar's able hands. It was he who quieted some suggestions on the part of the custom house that they would like either to open my portmanteau or receive some backsheesh; who engaged my boat for me, and fixed the payment of each of the four rowers at one bishlik, and when we were finally on board the ship he at once impressed two sailors into my service and saw that all my belongings were stowed away into the most convenient places. After that he took a cup of coffee with the captain, smoked a cigarette with the steward, and generally played the part of a welcome and highly favoured guest. When one of the ship's boats had been made ready to take him back to shore, I shook hands with him and presented him with a medjidi, thanking him warmly for his services.

"Ah!" he said, "you come back to Beyrout some day, and I will meet you."

Alas, poor Omar! this is never to be. I began this paper by asserting that were I compelled to change personalities with any man of my acquaintance, that man would be Omar, the policeman of Beyrout, thinking of him as a man who gained the respect of all that encountered him, and did good work "in the niche he was ordained to fill." And something more than that. A Conservative on most points, I must plead guilty to being Radical enough to believe with Ovid that "it is not wealth nor ancestry, but honourable conduct and a noble disposition, that make men great." Starting at the bottom of the tree, this Omar, with the aid of a strong arm, stronger character, and a reputation for fearlessness, having forced his way to the top, and attained a high position in a mixed community, had constituted himself a ruling power in the city, and had the good word of every honest and law-abiding resident. Trusted and respected by the better classes, he was equally respected though feared by the canaille, and his shrewd common-sense enabled him to use the laws, of which, as I have shown, he was at once servant and interpreter, for the benefit of society at large. If some of his methods would have been open to criticism in an English court of justice, he had the happy knack of so adjusting himself to circumstances that his decisions gave almost unmixed satisfaction.

Add to this a magnificent physique, a constitution that seemed to defy all the assaults of the naturally trying climate and the artificial impurities of Beyrout, and it is difficult indeed to think of a more fitting object whether of envy or admiration.

But alas, again, for Omar! News travels slowly from Beyrout, and I had practically completed this paper when an

Englishman whom I knew well in the East came almost direct from Beyrout to stay with me, and told me that Omar was the only person of note killed by the Italian bombardment. While most of the inhabitants of the town wisely shut themselves up indoors, or sought refuge in the hills, it appears that Omar had strolled down to the sea-shore, partly, no doubt, to show his contempt for and have his say at the Italian ships in the offing, more, perhaps, with the idea of reassuring the frightened population, or even to organise a resistance in the event of an Italian landing. But why analyse motives when the result of his rash action only remains? Early in the bombardment he was literally cut in half by a shell, and the Italians reaped by the wanton bombardment of a practically defenceless town the barren joy of having killed the best man in it. Omar died, as I believe he would have chosen to die, at the hands of his country's enemies, a rapid and painless death in the execution of what he conceived to be his duty, and setting an example of fearlessness to those around him. "Let my last end be like his," most of us might well say. I am afraid that in his case religious conviction was not deeply rooted. "I do not know," he was heard to say, "whether there be a God at all, but if there is, I am sure He must be an Englishman." A remarkable tribute to our country from a man who seemed to recognise that in a very mixed and I fear me very evil community, the Englishmen played the game of life with a straighter bat than their neighbours!

WITH THE ABOR EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

In the beginning of the year 1911 a curious state of affairs existed within striking distance of Sadiya, in Assam, the extreme north-east frontier station of British India, situated on the right bank of the Brahmaputra, some fifty miles to the north-east of the pleasant little cantonment of Dibrugarh, with its hospitable community and wealth of prosperous tea-gardens. Sadiya formed the base of a chain of outposts stretching towards the north and east, and, with detachments of native infantry and military police, was the headquarters of a political officer whose duty it was to exercise his influence over and to keep in touch with the hill tribes. Dibrugarh itself was the headquarters of the 114th Mahrattas and the Lakhimpur military police battalion, while a very efficient volunteer corps, the Assam Valley Light Horse, attracted planters from miles round into its ranks. Yet on the north bank of the Brahmaputra, between Sadiya and Dibrugarh, lay a sparsely populated region within the administered area, containing a few villages of a tribe called the Miris, where no Europeans were allowed to go, and where the Miris, British subjects, moved in fear of their lives. Occasionally the river near Sadiya and Dibrugarh would be alive with craft manned by terrified Miris seeking sanctuary. What was the cause of this apparently undignified figure that the Government of India was cutting? The answer was—A savage tribe of hillmen called Abors were dominating the plains. But could it be that a horde of naked savages was defying the British Raj with impunity? Yet so it was, and the history of our former relations with this tribe is neither instructive nor edifying, unfolding as it does a tale of ineffectual pursuits of raiders, of hasty withdrawals from apparently inaccessible and difficult country, of treaties made and broken by the Abors, of threats of punishment not carried out, of money allowances given to secure good behaviour, which was seldom or never indulged in, of grants to the tribesmen to carry out their own policing, resembling the policy of intrusting to the cat the safety of the cream, and of shifts undertaken to stave off the necessity of launching a large punitive force into an inhospitable and unknown region. So the years rolled on, and secure in their mountain fastnesses the Abors overawed the plains, increased in arrogance, raided and bullied British subjects.

In 1894 the murder of some military police sepoys led to the despatch of a punitive expedition of five hundred rifles into the Padam Abor country, but the force failed, through lack of transport, to

reach Damroh, the metropolis of the clan, and sustained considerable casualties at a post on the lines of communication. Since this time the allowance paid to the Abors for good behaviour has been discontinued. In 1909, the affairs of the north-eastern border of Assam were in the hands of a purposeful and energetic assistant political officer called Noel Williamson. Originally in the Indian Police, a service which together with the Army probably produces the type of man best suited to deal with wild tribes, he was possessed of a commanding presence and a fearless nature.

Early in 1909, for the purpose of establishing more satisfactory relations with the Abors, he visited, in company with Colonel Lumsden (late of Lumsden's Horse) and the Rev. W. L. B. Jackman of the American Mission, the village of Kebang, which at that time was the seat of the most powerful clan of the Minyong Abors. He was accorded a friendly reception, but was turned back on account of an inter-tribal war then being waged. In March 1911, accompanied by Doctor Gregorson and about fifty carriers, he again made an expedition into the Minyong country, hoping that through the previous friendly relations a more satisfactory *modus vivendi* might be established between the Abors and the dwellers in the plains. With the exception of six survivors, all this party was treacherously murdered by the Abors. Such wanton savagery could not be tolerated, and the Indian Government, stirred into energy, decided on the despatch of a punitive expedition to Aborland. A military police post was at once established at Balek in the Pasi Abor country to facilitate the advance of the force, but the season was unpropitious, and it was not until October 10 that the concentration of the Abor Expeditionary Force at Kobo on the Brahmaputra took place. After breaking down the opposition of the tribe, endeavours were to be made to clear up the mystery of the course of the Dihang, the main feeder of the Brahmaputra. Information on this point had hitherto only been derived from the reports of Kintup, an employé of the Government of India, who many years ago passed through numberless vicissitudes to accomplish his end. Sold into slavery by a Tibetan Lama whom he had trusted, he effected his escape, bringing back an account of his journeyings.

Simultaneously with the advance of the Abor Expedition, missions were to be despatched to the Mishmi and Miri tribes, while from Burma an exploration party accompanied by an escort was working north-east to Hkamtilong, in hitherto unexplored country. It is, however, only with the Abor Expedition that we can deal. It was a well-equipped and well-organised little force which took the field in October, consisting of the Lakhimpur Battalion (Gurkhas) of Military Police; the 1st Battalion 8th Gurkha Rifles, who had taken

part in every campaign on the north-eastern frontier, and in Tibet in 1904; the 1st Battalion 2nd Gurkhas, a most distinguished Regiment, which from the year 1815 has made its indelible mark on Indian history and carved for itself a proud record in the Sikh wars, the Mutiny, Afghanistan, Tirah, and in many minor expeditions; the 32nd Sikh Pioneers of frontier and Tibet fame, and the 1st Company of 1st Sappers and Miners, a corps which has taken part in every campaign of importance in India since the beginning of the nineteenth century, who brought with them bridging and demolition equipment, as well as two small mortars called Castor and Pollux. With the force were two seven-pounder guns, Bubble and Squeak, and the maxim guns with the three battalions. A soldierly machine-gun detachment of twelve volunteers from the Assam Valley Light Horse formed the only European unit. In addition to medical supply and signalling units were five corps of Naga coolies, each under a British officer. Later on a mule corps would supplement their transport work. Two war dogs, the property of Major Wilson, 8th Gurkhas, and trained by Major Richardson, accompanied the force.

Since April the military police had been at work, and in September Colonel Macintyre, an officer of wide experience in Assam, took over his varied duties at Kobo as Base Commandant before the arrival of the force. The command of the whole expedition was intrusted to Major-General Bower, C.B., distinguished as an explorer as well as a soldier in India, Tibet, Central Asia, China, and the Sudan. Torrents of rain and unprecedented floods followed the concentration of the force, the river attaining its full monsoon level, and washing away the whole of the foreshore of the camp. Few will forget the sight of the mighty Brahmaputra in flood, carrying along in its course huge pine-trees stript of their bark, derelict dug-outs torn from their moorings, drift-wood crashing against the sides of the steamers and lighters at anchor. Operations were delayed, and the rain-sodden troops and coolies clearing tracks in the thick virgin forest were tormented with myriads of leeches. The preparations for the advance went on, however, and on the 20th October the first column, some five hundred rifles of the 2nd Gurkhas and military police with a few Pioneers, and accompanied by some five hundred Naga coolies, started in the direction of Ledum to protect the flank of the main column and to guard the western frontier. Their departure at dawn was sufficiently stirring and picturesque. The crouching Naga coolies rose and placed their loads in curious conical-shaped baskets, carried by means of a band of bark round the head, while the Gurkha escort, one rifleman to every six carriers, with here and there a larger party, took up their positions amongst them. Each Naga carried

a spear and wore a *dao* (sword) round his waist. The scouts and advanced-guard moved forward into the dark jungle, followed by the Pioneers, main body, and guns. Then came the hospital with bearers carrying net hammocks and poles; followed by the ammunition, signalling equipment, and baggage of the troops borne by the Nagas with unceasing grunts, suited to the gradient of the track. We were destined to hear and welcome these grunts for many a long day, betokening often as they did the arrival of rations or letters from the old country; but to my ear they usually sounded like the first two tones of the Chinese language, the leading Naga emitting the low tone, and his comrade in rear the rising tone. But on went the Ledum column, a few elephants accompanying it; the forest of steel became enveloped by the mightier forest of wood, soldiers and coolies in an unceasing stream, "Chelo, chelo" (get on) the cry. "Too long have we been in camp, brothers. Let us prove our mettle in the world beyond. Be the future what it may, the present is with us, and it is chelo, chelo."

On moved the snake-like, steel-tipped mass, the slow-moving elephants were engulfed in the jungle, the grunts of the carriers grew fainter, the rear-guard was almost invisible, the last well-trained little Gurkha of the rear-guard turned about, cast a comprehensive glance around, and rejoined his comrades, who in turn will keep watch and ward in the dark forest—going, going, gone. The jungle swallowed them up. The turn of the main column came two days later, and in high spirits took the headquarters of the force, with the 8th Gurkhas and Light Horse Volunteers as striking force, and the Sappers and Miners and 32nd Pioneers left Kobo, marching north-eastward towards Pasi Ghat, through dense virgin forest. Their course might well have been termed "tunnelling," for thicker jungle it is hard to imagine. The eye could not pierce the tangle of creepers, and none but an armadillo could move unscathed amid the thickets. South Africa has its "wait-a-bit" thorn, and the Assam jungle its "bet," which confronts the traveller at every turn, winding in prickly luxuriance across his path, above his head, around his limbs, and will not let him go. With "kukri" and "dao" the track had been cleared by the indefatigable pioneers of the force, the military police, and a generous contribution from the civil authorities had provided coolies to work at road-making until the arrival of the force.

The pace through the jungle was perforce slow, and one could look around. How beautiful yet how awe-inspiring was the scene! The jest was stilled, and the majesty of the dense primeval forest made itself felt. Gigantic trees, interlaced with strings of creepers, towered skyward, blocking out the sunlight. Only thick massive trees can apparently escape the ravages of these parasites, tall slender ones being the chief

sufferers. Twisting and twining around them, the creeper carries out its deadly work, decking the doomed trees with bizarre mourning weeds, festooning and bridging the gaps between with fantastic yet beautiful "pothooks and hangers" above the wanderer's head and across his path. The luxuriance and fertility of these noisome parasites, which like gigantic octopuses throw out their tentacles and choke the life out of the trees, seem phenomenal. Tricked out in every alluring form, as gaudy orchids, as tender tree-ferns, as feathery and thorny "bet," as luscious water-creepers, green and flourishing, they carry on their work of destruction. The pendulous tentacles take root afresh in the ground surrounding the trees, whose withered leaves fall, and whose sapped, devitalised trunks sink to the ground, forming a carpet of decaying vegetation which, soaked by torrential rain, fills the air with a dank, pestilential stench. Now and then a glint of sun where the trees were thinner lightened the gloomy path. Emerald-green parrots occasionally screamed their resentment at the intrusion of so many visitors; otherwise nothing broke the stillness of the jungle save the tramp of the armed mass moving steadily forward in Indian file. At last our eyes were gladdened with a vista of trees, a glimpse of the blue sky above, and our halting-place.

Our next day's march led through similar jungle, but signs of animal life were apparent, and the thickets were thinner. The spoor of a buffalo and the "pug" of "Stripes" were visible near a stream, whose waters were deep-green by reason of the mass of foliage overhanging. The curious whirr of the "cicada," the screech of the hornbill, and the cough of a startled barking deer were heard, and gorgeous butterflies flitted to and fro. At the close of our next day's march we reached Pasi Ghat on the Dihang, the gate of Aborland. We had traversed the plains, and now the foothills led up to the strongholds of the Abors. Above us towered Rigam, the sacred mountain of the Abors, alleged to be the dwelling-place of a deity in the guise of a fish, who swims in a tank near the summit. Our objectives were the villages of Rotung and Kebang. Meanwhile reports came in from the active Ledum column of encounters with hostile tribesmen.

Little was known about the country in front of us. Owing to the difficulties of transport no tents were carried with the force, and the chronicle of the next three weeks with the main column, in what is probably the rainiest part of the world, is but a dreary one, telling the tale, as it does, of constant jungle-clearing, road-making, of brushes with elusive Abors, of attempted ambushes, of rock-shutes discharged, of fatal casualties from poisoned arrows, of rain-sodden bivouacs, of fever and water-logged camps. Of the pomp and circumstance of glorious war there was little, only a bedraggled slender force moving

step by step into country whose difficulties seemed to increase every day. The foot-hills were succeeded by steeper hills heavily forested; no clearings existed unless there was cultivation. On the 19th November the striking force, with the minimum of baggage, reached a razor-backed rock, the ascent to which was a very severe one, from the bed of a mountain stream. The information tended to show that a stockade, with its concomitant of rock-shutes, might be encountered near here, and while flanking parties occupied the heights, the main body moved forward from the rock into the valley below, a sheer drop, trees and twigs fortunately assisting the descent. Without doubt this ground was dedicated by the Abors to the God of Battles; forked bows with platforms behind dominated paths, arrow shavings were found, while carefully prepared bolt-holes through the cane-brake showed how the enemy had escaped. "Panjies," fire-hardened bamboo spikes driven in slantwise, beset the narrow track, while spring-bows were discovered in the grass. A barricade was made across a stream, to reach which a bamboo grove had to be traversed. Around us were the precipitous verdure-clad cliffs, and a mountain stream dashed below. Down into the gorge went the troops, winding through gigantic wild plantain-trees till at about 3.30 P.M. a small clearing was reached, where it was decided to camp for the night. First, however, the position of the force had to be considered; the spot was an ugly one, resembling a "bear pit," with a restricted bivouac, and possible rock-shutes, pit-falls, and stockades around us. It was obvious that unless the ground in our immediate vicinity was cleared and the heights above us piqueted, the force might pass a night disturbed by the attention of the Abors and their arrows.

The advanced-guard moved forward, followed by General Bower and other officers, while the preparations for the encampment were commenced by the remainder of the force.

A stockade was soon discovered, from which a shot rang out, and Dal Bahadur, the guide, one of the survivors of Mr Williamson's party, received a bullet in his shoulder. Simultaneously an enormous rock-shute was discharged and thundered down the gorge, just missing the British officers and their party. Staggering down the stone-swept path, Dal Bahadur returned to the camp. Fire was immediately opened at the stockade, from which showers of arrows were coming. With the rattle of musketry were blended the crash of six more rock-shutes, discharged from the stockade one after another, and the defiant shouts of the Abors. Both officers and men narrowly escaped injuries, Captain Becher being swept off the path by a heavy stone on his helmet.

Arrows fell amongst the party clearing the bivouac, and the first shot, the rumble of the falling rock-shutes, and the peals of musketry sent everybody to their alarm-posts, while

reinforcements were at once sent up the hill from the camp. Meanwhile General Bower had despatched a party of the 8th Gurkhas under Lieutenants Kennedy and Buckland up the hill to outflank the enemy's stockade, who, after a steep climb, succeeded in getting under the flanking stockades. At times unable to fire, little by little, although subjected to the discharge of arrows and rock-shutes, they worked their way up and outflanked the main stockade. Lieutenant Buckland first entered, followed by the remainder of the party, who encountered the Abors in flight, six of whom were killed. One was in close grips with a Gurkha officer when Lieutenant Kennedy shot him with his revolver. One Gurkha was injured by a rock. With the flight of the Abors the stockade was taken. Its situation was on a steep hill above a gorge, the path to it leading through a bamboo thicket. Its construction was a marvel of defensive ingenuity. Built in a commanding position, with every advantage taken of the shape of the ground, its right flank rested on an inaccessible height. The main stockade was constructed of logs, with trunks of plantain-trees laid horizontally to cool the attackers' shells, the interstices being filled with stones and the whole bound together by lianas. Sleeping accommodation for about fifty defenders was found in the interior of the stockade, which was a labyrinth of obstacles, and from which, by means of poisoned arrows and stone-shutes, cross, flanking, enfilade, and frontal fire could be directed against the attacker, while a flanking bastion forty yards from the main stockade was furnished with a rock-shute. Again, should the attacker effect an entrance into the stockade, rocks and arrows would be his portion. Even after the stockade had been taken it was difficult to make one's way through the network of pitfalls, machicoulis galleries, loopholes, and traverses. One scrambled round stone-shutes rendered innocuous by the absence of defenders, while one of them attracted our special attention, formed as it was of part of the walls of the stockade with rocks piled up against the logs, the inner edge resting on the ground and the outer supported by bark ropes lashed to a tree. One slash with a "dao" and down would crash the rocks into the precipice below. From the appearance of the logs, I should say that the stockade had been made some months—that is to say, just after the outrage on Mr Williamson's party, when the military police first took up their advanced post.

The ingenuity displayed by the Abors in defence of this stockade recalled the shifts and contrivances used by the Boxers and Imperial troops in China during the troubles of 1900. The topmost bastion of the Abor stockade was piqueted before nightfall, and in the dark those who had taken part in the assault climbed down the hill, reaching the crowded bivouac about 6 P.M. There had been no time to make shelters, and the whole force,

hungry and weary, appeased their hunger, and flung themselves down to rest, with the heights around them crowned. They had been twelve hours continuously under arms.

The next day the force pushed on to Rotung, which was found deserted and burnt by the enemy. While at Rotung the main column was reinforced by two companies of the 2nd Gurkhas from the Ledum column, who by their activity had broken down the opposition of the Abors on the western side. On the 4th December the Abor stronghold of Kekar Monying was captured. At 5 P.M. on the 3rd December a column of three hundred men under Captain Coleridge, 8th Gurkhas, had crossed the Dihang by means of rafts made of waterproof bags filled with straw. The difficulties of getting a cable across during the previous night, unobserved by the enemy, were increased by the varying nature of the current, and the presence of rapids above and below the point of crossing rendered the attempts most perilous. Having reached the opposite bank, the scouts found a path, and all through the night an advance was made to take up a position at dawn commanding the Abor stockade. At 1.30 A.M. a party of Abors attacked them, shouting their war-cries, killing two Gurkha riflemen, and cutting through with their swords the stock of a rifle and a great-coat. The enemy were driven off, losing two of their number. The shots were heard in Rotung camp, from which at 5.45 P.M. a start was made by the remainder of the striking force, who detached three companies of the 8th Gurkhas to operate on the left flank.

Captain Coleridge's column on the other bank of the Dihang was in position, and communication between all three parties was maintained throughout by telephone. At 11 A.M. the mist which had previously obscured the enemy's position rolled away, and the stockade was taken without difficulty, the Abors holding it being put to flight, and disappearing into the thick jungle. It was impossible on account of the denseness of the forest to estimate their casualties. Fifty rock-shutes, from which the Abors were driven by our attack, were found undischarged on the line of our expected advance. The stockade was not as formidable or as carefully concealed as the one captured on the 19th November. *Chevaux-de-frise* of sharpened bamboos were strewn on the ground in front, and darts were embedded in shallow pits to form obstacles.

With the capture of the village of Kebang four days later, the back of the Abor resistance was broken, and the prestige of the hitherto unconquered Kebang clan received a severe blow. There were small affairs of ambuscades on the part of the Abors, but any concerted opposition was at an end.

All the villagers concerned in the murder of Mr Williamson and his party came in, fines were inflicted, and a mule road from the base was made.

Memorial cairns with inscriptions inserted were erected on the spots where the late Mr Williamson and Dr Gregorson were murdered, and on the 13th January the stone in Mr Williamson's cairn was unveiled amidst a most impressive scene. On the left of the cairn stood a guard of sixty riflemen, with their British and Gurkha officers, and near it were the headmen and the villagers of Komsing. The inscription in the cairn faced the "moshup," or guardroom, where the young warriors have their quarters and where the grey-beards instruct them in the art of fighting and hunting. The "First Post" was sounded by the bugles, followed by the "general salute," as the stone was unveiled, the troops presenting arms. A speech was then made by Colonel Murray to the headmen, pointing out that for all time the upkeep of the cairn and the stone was their duty, and that they would be held responsible by the Government. Around were the cruel, cunning faces of the Abors, within whose village unsuspecting strangers had been murdered, and near them the motionless figures of the Gurkhas — like ourselves, aliens in this far-off country, but serving under the same flag and representing the power of a far-reaching hand. Then rang out the first short, sharp notes of the "Last Post," the British officers uncovering their heads, and with the last prolonged notes ended a soldier's requiem—a fitting tribute to one who had fearlessly ventured his life in the service of his country.

The headquarters of the force were at Yambung, in the deep gorge of the Dihang, where the sun shed its benign rays only a few hours in the day, while the roar of the swift-flowing river was the soldier's lullaby. Mist, rain, snow, difficulties of transport, and the inhospitable nature of the country militated against the work of the exploration parties, while the treachery of the Abor had always to be guarded against.

More unattractive savages than the Abors it would be hard to find. Of Tibeto-Burman origin, they speak a language which is allied to that of the Tibetans, while their arts, such as they are, probably come from Tibet. Their religion is animistic, an adjective so often loosely applied to that of aborigines, but which in the case of the Abors apparently comprises a belief in a future state, the worship of certain sylvan deities and their propitiation, the use of charms and omens, and a rooted aversion to work. The deity "Piang" is the god of war and the chase, and is believed to favour attacks on defenceless neighbours and the ruthless destruction of all game. In pursuance of a policy to propitiate him, men and women are killed or taken as slaves, big game is hunted, birds, squirrels, and fish are trapped. The elemental belief in man as the hunter, and consequently the more fitted to be the protector, still holds good, so the women and slaves toil unceasingly at the crops, as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and my lord, bow in

hand and with quiver on his shoulder, stalks off on the war-path, his arrows poisoned with aconite or croton berry. Their burial rites present points of interest similar to those of African savages. Over the grave of each defunct warrior is a grass shelter, where are hung his cane helmet, "dao," bow and arrows, the horns of the tame bison which furnished the funeral feast, with a basket containing food to propitiate the deity. Both men and women adopt a coiffure similar to that of the Nagas, but the hair is cut higher up the head.

Both sexes wear ear-rings, which drag down the lobes of the ears, while often the only article of attire on the part of the men is a sporran of bark cut into strips, or made of squirrel skin. The women are tattooed about the mouth, sometimes in squares and at other times in stars, indigo being used, and they wear cane waist-belts, cane anklets, and leather belts with embossed brasses, while coloured cloths of their own weaving are tied about the lower part of their persons. The younger women wear a loose belt of copper discs, which is called a "boyop." A fleecy cotton blanket coat is fashionable among the men during the cold weather. Like most aborigines, they brew and drink an unlimited amount of liquor, which gives them "Dutch" courage. Their villages are very filthy, and their huts are built on piles. Often goitrous, and always dirty, their Mongoloid features have not the frankness of the Naga or Kachin. They suffer from sore eyes, the result of their uncleanly habits and the pungent smoke from their fires. Small-pox has frequently raged in their midst, and their villages are liable to periodical outbreaks of cholera. They are squat and sturdy, and appear intelligent, but they have proved themselves treacherous in the past, and, friendly or otherwise, should not be thoroughly trusted. They cultivate in the usual primitive migratory fashion of aborigines. The metropolis of the Padam Abors, Damroh, was visited by an exploration party under Colonel Macintyre, while similar parties were carrying on their work under the unfavourable conditions I have mentioned. By April 1912 all exploration parties had come in, and the withdrawal of the force began. At first it was intended to occupy Rotung, which is only some sixteen miles from Pasi Ghat, but the post has subsequently been given up. It is not within my province to criticise this policy, but General Bower's despatch on the seven months' arduous work of the Abor Expedition speaks for itself, and further comment is needless.

"As the result of the operations the culpable villages have been punished. Six men who took part in the massacre of Mr Williamson's party have been captured and tried. Five were found guilty and sentenced. The rifles taken have been restored, and our capability to punish evil-doers, which hitherto has not been

credited, has been brought home to the tribesmen. Practically the whole Abor country has been visited, and excellent relations established.

"The domination exercised by the Kebang-Rotung group of villages has been broken, and the villages in the interior can now trade with India. The part of the North Lakhimpur district lying to the north of the Brahmaputra can now be recognised, there being now nothing to fear from Abor raids. A good road fit for mules has been constructed from Kobo to Yambung, and Abor paths improved. In spite of the fact that the weather could hardly have been less favourable than it was for surveying, the following results were obtained:—

"(*a*) An accurate series of triangulation emanating from the Assam longitudinal series of the great trigonometrical survey has been carried over the outlying ranges to the latitude of Kebang, terminating in the base Sadup H.S. Namkam H.S. This will prove of the greatest assistance to future surveyors or explorers.

"(*b*) From this series, and an extension of reconnaissance triangulation to the latitude of Shimang, several large snowy peaks have been fixed on what appears to be the main Himalayan divide, including one very fine peak over 25,000 feet high. Many more snow peaks have also been fixed on the watershed between the Dihang and Subansiri rivers, which seems to be a very prominent spur of the main divide.

"About 3500 square miles have been more or less rigorously mapped on a scale of four miles to one inch, including the whole of the Yamne and Shimang valleys, a portion of the Siyom river, and the whole of the Dihang valley as far north as Singging.

"Campaigning in a country where the difficulties of transport are so great necessarily involved considerable hardship on the men, and great extremes were experienced, from tropical heat to bivouacking in snow. In one place this was lying nine feet deep. The continuous bad weather experienced during part of the operations was a greater hardship than it would be in a campaign on which tents could be carried. The work was hard, unremitting, and continued watchfulness was required against an enemy ever ready to take advantage of an opportunity. Difficulties of exploration were accentuated by the impossibility of columns living on the country. The Abors grow only sufficient rice for their own consumption, and are most unwilling to part with it. I cannot speak too highly of the conduct of all ranks under trying circumstances, and trust that the operations will meet with the approval of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief."

The King has been graciously pleased to approve of the grant of the Indian general service medal, with clasp, to the troops employed on the Abor Expedition.

WANDERER.

SHIPWRECKED.

BY GEORGE FORBES, F.R.S.

[The following narrative was written from notes made within twenty-four hours of landing after the shipwreck.]

HAVING made several voyages to the Mediterranean in tramp steamers, I have no hesitation in making two statements. One is, that when sailing in ballast, which always means insufficient ballast, every tramp skipper dreads meeting with really bad weather, and this dread is shared by every member of the crew. The second statement is, that there is no water so much feared by these masters as the Gulf of Lyons. The Bay of Biscay can be bad, but its depth saves it from the shortness and fierceness of the seas during a gale in the Gulf of Lyons. The boldest navigators of tramp steamers when crossing the Gulf, in going to or from Genoa or Savona, never go right across it. They hug the coast so as to be sure of a port of refuge in case of danger to the ship.

The s.s. *Hasland*, 1070 tons register, 125 h.p., had sailed from Cardiff on the 7th February 1911, with a cargo of coal for Barcelona, and with no further instructions. The passage out was slow, owing to the foul state of the ship's bottom. In calm water in port, on looking down at it, you could see something like a kitchen-garden growing on the iron plates.

Instructions came from home to go in ballast from Barcelona to Hornillo, in Spain, to take on board a cargo of iron ore for Cette, 150 miles west from Marseilles, there to await orders.

On our way from Hornillo to Cette we had some frightful weather during the last day in the Gulf of Lyons, and iron ore is about the worst cargo possible in a beam sea. I could only stand on the poop by holding on. I could not safely have gone to the bridge. However, we got there all safe.

Meantime, the orders from home were, on completion of the discharge of cargo, to proceed from Cette in ballast to Bona, in Algeria, for a cargo of phosphate, and to make the voyage to Rotterdam.

It was the beginning of the equinoctial gales. There was fine weather for a time, but the glass again fell ominously. By the time that the holds were clear a heavy sea was dashing over the breakwater, although there was only a moderate wind from the south-east. It was clear that out at sea there must be foul weather.

All the water-ballast that could be taken in the tanks amounted to only 335 tons, making her draught forward eight feet six inches, and aft

twelve feet three inches, with the propeller not quite half immersed in smooth water. The average landsman does not know how great this danger is. Owing to the smallness of the tanks provided for water ballast in tramps, every one of these ships does at times become unmanageable in rough weather, and every sailor on board of them knows that then his life may be in peril. A second Plimsoll will have to come forward to insist upon a minimum load-line. When in ballast the modern-built tramp skims like a saucer over the surface of the sea. Her whole side is exposed to the wind, and while driving full speed ahead she may drift eight points away from her course and be driven upon the rocks. If you try to put her head-on to the seas her propeller is entirely out of water three-quarters of the time. The racing of the propeller may become so terrific that it may break from the shaft, or the shaft itself may break. Again, the speed is so much reduced that there is no steerage-way, and she is blown into the trough of the sea with the wind and sea on her beam. The rolling is then bad enough to unship the masts and funnel, and even loosen the boiler setting, while the lives of the men in the stokehold are endangered. Any heavy thing in the ship that is not fixed with the utmost security becomes an object of peril.

The pilot came on board, we cast off before noon, and, leaving the smooth water of the inner harbour, proceeded under shelter of the breakwater. On approaching the east end of it the pilot left us. The hatchways were then closed and tarpaulins secured over them by wedges. From the bridge we watched the seas foaming over the breakwater, and had to face a sea out of all proportion to the wind that was blowing. The propeller was racing even now, and the glass was still going back.

Matters grew worse and worse every hour. The wind soon rose to a gale, and the short peaky seas with white crests were tumbling upon the forward well-deck. At four o'clock it began to be serious. Up till then the log indicated nineteen miles made in four hours, but in the next four hours she made only twelve miles more. At this time, 4 P.M., we could see by the wake of the ship that she was drifting a point and a half out of her course.

Our course for Bona was south-south-east, but the captain turned the ship's head to make her go easier if possible. At 5.30 P.M. we had tea in the cabin. Captain O'Hara and I both recognised that we were in for a wild night. I asked him, not half in chaff, where the lifebelts were stowed. He told me in the chart-room. While we were talking the rattle of the propeller shaft became so violent that he said he must go on the bridge and try to put the ship on a better course. He might have to put her in the trough of the sea. I

followed him presently as far as the poop, but could not think of making for the bridge in the dark. Everything was black except when a faint gleam came from a wave breaking, as it seemed, nearly overhead. So I returned to the cabin. In an hour or two O'Hara came below for a few minutes. He had been trying different courses, and eased her a bit by going astern for ten minutes with the sea. The gale was increasing every minute. He feared the ship might become unmanageable in the trough of the sea before long. I took to watching the swinging lamp, and it seemed to roll quite sixty degrees each way. Also the roll was much quicker than I had seen it. The double roll took about three seconds, certainly not four seconds. That means under two seconds for swinging each way.

I went to bed, and when the captain next appeared I was asleep. I was very sleepy and stared at him, and wondered if he had come to search for something. He told me to get up and dress, as we might have to take to the boats. The ship had a hole in her bottom, and was making water fast in Nos. 1 and 2 holds. He had called all hands, and was doing all he could to keep the ship afloat till daylight.

The captain had no time to wait. There were hundreds of matters requiring his immediate attention. So soon as he left, and while I was hurriedly dressing in my warmest clothing, I became conscious of extreme discomfort and such a parched, bad-tasting mouth as I had only once before felt when poisoned with ptomaine on board H.M.S. *Jupiter* off Majorca in the Mediterranean not far from here some few years ago. [On that occasion Captain S—— invited many of the flag-captains of the fleet that were engaged in manœuvres to dinner, and nearly killed us all with *paté de foie gras en aspic.*] Afterwards I found that the steward, whose berth was aft, was in the same case. It turned out that the stove chimney would not draw in the gale, and we had been poisoned by the noxious gases. This was a nice beginning to a strenuous time! Dressing was difficult, as all the contents of the room were being flung about in a litter on the floor.

I had put my head on deck for a moment and seen that it was utterly impossible to launch a boat. So none of my possessions seemed to matter a pin. Tobacco was the first necessity: it supplies the place of food, drink, warmth, dry clothing, and sleep. I put a box of matches in each pocket in hopes that one of them might keep dry. Then I pocketed my loose cash and a Coutts' cheque-book.

I seemed now to have done all that was possible. But supposing we should be able to get into a boat, and if so something more might be taken, I opened a shirt-case, and dropped into it the oddest selection of articles you can imagine. There seemed to be

no chance of using these things again, and there was no sort of rule to guide me as to what to take and what to leave behind. Afterwards, in the boat, I discovered that the captain had found the same difficulty. All he saved was a pair of hair-brushes in a case, a present from his mother-in-law, and he could not tell why he had taken these. Evans, too, the chief engineer, in the boat, found in his pockets the only things that he had saved, and they were three saw-files. He had no recollection of when or why he had secured them.

Seeing a Gladstone bag, I put into it a change of clothes in case it might come also; but I was determined not to inconvenience the others if there was too little room in the boat.

I went on the poop, but nothing was to be seen except the blaze of a riding-light rigged up amidships and the white combers over us. Then, as I stood getting a puff of fresh air, the captain fired off rockets from near the bridge as signals of distress. The roof of my mouth and tongue were still frightfully parched and dry and uncomfortable as when I first awoke, and it was hateful to go back to the foul air of the cabin, but on doing so I was overjoyed to see the faithful steward and to hear him in his usual voice saying —"A cup o' tea, Mr Forbes." His first thought on learning there was trouble was to keep up a fire as long as possible in the galley; and for some hours after this a cup of tea was to be had, a most welcome draught to us with that awful taste in the mouth.

And now the skipper came aft for a few minutes to tell me what had happened. It appears that a new fresh-water tank, weighing six tons filled, had been put, just before this voyage, at the top of the forward hold No. 1. The tank was on a solid fixed platform in front of the hold, and was put two feet away from the collision-bulkhead for inspection purposes. A band round the tank was fixed to the bulkhead, with six billets of wood jammed in, which were supposed to prevent the tank from moving. Naturally enough, the violent rolling in the evening tore away this tank from its platform, and it fell to the bottom of No. 1 hold, and then took charge, tearing up everything in its career at every roll, stanchions and wood-work and ceiling, and the bulkhead separating Nos. 1 and 2 holds, and making a hole somewhere in the ship's bottom. The forward holds were soon swamped with water, and the size or position of the hole could not be ascertained. The great fear was that it might be torn open to a greater extent, when the ship would quickly go down.

Later on, when the captain came again to the cabin to get out the men's books, ship's papers, and money, he could not find room for them in his pocket, so I found for him a handbag with lock and key that had been my travelling companion for twenty years. This proved most useful.

I do not know what time it was now, but it was after midnight. On going forward to the bridge-deck I found the whole of the crew amidships. The ship had a heavy list to starboard which, combined with her roll, made it very difficult to walk on the wood or to prevent slipping on the iron deck. I was surprised to find every one of the crew was already furnished with a life-belt or cork jacket wrapped round his chest. They looked very funny. The men were rather cowed, and the mate was telling them that the water was gaining on the pumps only one and a-half feet per hour. They were not at work at the hand pumps, because these had become choked with the floating trash in the holds.

Soon afterwards the main engines had to be stopped and could not be used for pumping. There was not enough steam, as only the port boiler could with difficulty be stoked. The furnace of the starboard boiler on the lee side was flooded owing to the persistent list of twenty degrees to starboard, and was extinguished. Leaky watertight doors and sluices had admitted water from No. 2 hold. The firemen and engineers working to keep the port boiler going were often above their knees in water.

O'Hara, now that the men were of no use at the hand pumps, set them to work on the starboard lifeboat, to get her ready for launching if the sea should moderate sufficiently to allow of an attempt.

In both of the forward holds I could see the water swishing across at every roll, carrying on its surface a mass of timber wreckage, smashed by the run-a-muck fresh-water tank and stanchions, but the tank was not to be seen. The rolling of the ship had been reduced by the partial filling of these holds, but the sea was raging under a gale of full strength from the east-south-east.

When the starboard lifeboat had its cover off and everything ready, there was no use doing the same with the port lifeboat. It being on the windward side, and the ship having such a list to starboard, it was quite hopeless to think of launching that boat. So the captain made the men prepare the small boat forward on the starboard side, and move the gear into it from the port lifeboat.

After this the men were left with nothing to do. The forward holds were filling rapidly. When we left Cette the draught forward had been four feet less than aft. Things had by this time become very different. Besides the list to starboard, there was now a steep slope down from stern to bow, and it seemed as if she might go down bow first at any moment. The pitchy darkness added to the effect, and put some terror for a time into the hearts of the crew. So it happened at this stage that the sailors, after some little talk among themselves, came to the captain to give him their opinion, which amounted to this: "The ship is going to sink, and it may do so any moment. So

the sooner we launch the boats and get off in them the better." O'Hara's action at this moment was typical of the man. During the whole night he never spoke a word in a high voice, still less did he need to use an oath now or at any time. Every word spoken, whether an order or an explanation, was given in his ordinary voice. He now called the men together, and spoke a few pithy words to them in a calm even voice, and I am sure it was the effect of these words spoken at the first symptom of possible panic that afterwards produced the extraordinary display of discipline and confidence in the master that excited my wonder during the whole subsequent proceedings. He said: "You must not allow your fears to get the better of you. You have got to trust me to be able to judge best from minute to minute, perhaps from hour to hour, what the ship's chances may be. In any case, no boat could possibly be launched in this sea in the dark, and you must wait till daylight, even if the ship founders. You know my only object is to save you all if possible, and you must help me by trusting me and by believing that I am doing my best all the time to get you into safety, but," he added in a firm voice, "if any of you were to try to rush it and to take the matter into your own hands at this moment, I tell you that you are going to certain death."

By this time it was nearly two o'clock, and he went down into the engine-room to see what could be done there. The main engines were stopped for want of steam, and the starboard boiler was out of action. The engineers were fighting for the lives of all by putting all available steam on to the ballast-pump and keeping up the furnace of the port boiler.

Rockets were now again fired, but there was no response. Things were certainly looking very bad, and there is no doubt the black darkness made matters worse. A riding-light had been fitted at the entrance of the engineers' quarters on the afterpart of the bridge-deck, and the firemen and second engineer occasionally came on deck to get shovels from the bunkers or some other job. The chief alone stuck to the engines and boilers without cessation.

When I came across O'Hara or the mate or the drawling bo'sun, they each had a sense of humour, and we exchanged some feeble witticism. There were two or three of the hands who had been quite cheerful. One, called the Cockney, always expressed himself in an amusing way, and Paddy West could produce a pretence of a joke at any moment, and they always had some chaff for Vaughan, who had been in the Boer war and was always putting on an air of superiority.

The mate came up to me about this time and said, "Well, Mr Forbes, this is the third shipwreck I have been in." Without a moment's hesitation I replied, "Well, Mr

Good, I hope it won't be the last." On the whole, I think it was the right thing to say. Anyway, we both had a good laugh over it, and he re-echoed my sentiment.

A few minutes later O'Hara and I had a talk in the chart-room. He said, "Look, there is your lifebelt. I put it out for you, and you can find it here when you want it." He was as cheerful as ever, but very sad about the loss of his ship. "She has not many hours to live. I have been dreading all this time the possibility of the leak enlarging; if it does that, she will go down pretty quick. We can't see the hole, and have no notion where it is or how big it is. But we have to do our best with the pumps, and hope she may stay afloat till daylight. In this sea it is quite impossible to launch the boats in the dark. In fact, in this weather it could not be done in daylight. The boats would be smashed at once."

We went aft together to get a cup of tea, and he served out some whisky to a fireman who had been working hard in the stokehold with his legs in water. We looked round the dear old cabin, far better than what one finds in the modern-built tramp. Its polished panels looked so homelike. It was sad to say good-bye to it. We picked up books and papers that were flying across the room, took a last glance at pictures on the walls, looked into the cupboard with chronometer, sextant, medicines, and so forth.

From now onwards was the most anxious time to all on board. No one expected the ship to float more than an hour. The gale was still increasing in force. It was pitch dark overhead. Our one lamp on deck showed in its neighbourhood groups of men who had nothing to do except to sit on the iron deck and hold on, and hardly a word was heard from any of them. The rolling and the persistent list to starboard made movement difficult. But it was the slope from stern down to bow that gave us the reminder that she might plunge into the depths within the next few minutes, and I think it was this slope of the deck forward that created so great a feeling of insecurity. No one cared to remain long aft in the cabin, because at any moment she might make her last dive.

The captain had been down in the engine-room to encourage the chief to keep steam in the port boiler for working the pump on which our hopes lay. He promised faithfully that at the first sign of immediate danger he would at once come to warn the chief. It was at this time that the firemen struck work. With the great list to starboard the iron ladder to the engine-room was now sloping the wrong way. So it was very difficult for the men to get up and down, and the fear of being drowned in a trap sent some natural dread into the hearts of the firemen. A tramp has not got the discipline of a man-of-war. Our laws distinctly forbid that.

But even were it otherwise, no one would have used coercion under the circumstances. Yet at this moment our only hopes of living till daylight or of being able to launch a boat lay in the working of these pumps and keeping up steam. There was now only one man in the stokehold; only one man at work on the port boiler furnace, up to his knees in water; only one man to attend to the ballast-pump that was fighting the leak for life till daylight. This man, the chief, stuck to his job hour after hour all alone except for the occasional visits of encouragement paid him by his friend the captain, who himself is a man among men, and who in this time of danger and emergency took the whole responsibility on himself and went silently to work with his own hands on every undertaking that required nerve or resource or a strong arm.

At 3 A.M. we had a scratch breakfast aft with tea, and this was a great boon to all of us. The steward busied himself in filling a small sack with any food he could find for the boats. Bread, cheese, cakes, and a plum-pudding happened to be available. We knew that this breakfast was the last time when tea would be obtainable. In fact, if we failed to get off in the boats, this cup of tea was to be the last drink in our lives, for our fresh-water tank was at the bottom of the hold, and there was no more fresh water. It is true that the boats were furnished with brand new breakers which had been filled with water at Hornillo, but they could not be touched.

During the remainder of the pitch-dark night the men remained seated on the iron bridge deck, that rolled and sloped to leeward, and the incline of the deck forward always emphasised the likelihood of an immediate plunge by the head into the depths of the sea. The silence of the main engines, the rattle of the ballast-donkey, the swishing and battering of the water and lumber in the foreholds, the shrieking of the wind and the towering over us of spray-topped waves, made up an inferno whose terrors had by now become monotonous, with never a new sensation to distract the attention or to enliven the thought by a temporary diversion that would be gained by the excitement of action or by feats of strength or skill. It must have been dreadful for these poor men, some of whom I knew had wives and families dependent on them. It was marvellous that there was never among them the slightest panic. Not one of them expressed aloud any of the horror that they may have felt at the approaching unpleasant kind of death. These men were British, they had each of them been often on the margin of a watery grave in every year of their lives at sea, and they faced the prospect like British sailors of the race of men that went down in the *Birkenhead*.

I sat on a bench inside the entrance to the engineers'

quarters in surprised admiration at the conduct of these men. I could not have believed that, since the passing of the sailing-ship, such heroes were to be found upon the decks of a common tramp; and the experience made me feel a pride in my country, and in the centuries of tradition that had built up this code of honour and this bull-dog character in the hearts of a nation. These men had not been picked out for their trade on account of any noble qualities. They were the ordinary stuff out of which the Briton is made. Their stoical indifference to what lay before them, combined with a presence of mind, a readiness in each to help his neighbour, and in all a determination to work and toil for the common good, made me hope and believe that the self-reliant pluck which seems to belong to the isolation of the islander, whether British or Japanese, is not dead in our country.

There may be other countries, I hope there are, where men, equally chosen at haphazard from the same rank of life as these men, would have behaved as well; but I have never seen them, although I have been in situations as critical, or nearly so, in many countries of the world. Particularly I recalled with amusement the occasion when my dahabieh was wrecked in shooting the Babh-el-kebir at the First Cataract of the Nile before the dam was built.

I had been travelling and doing some engineering work in the Dongola province of the Nile Valley, and had left my dahabieh at Wady Halfa until the flood had so far subsided that it was almost impossible to hope to get the large ship in safety through the Great Gate of the cataract. My steam-tug drew more water, and it had already been passed down to Assouan. We waited some days at Philæ while the *reis* (captain) with the local pilot surveyed the point of danger and laid their plans for the descent. The water-level on the Nilometer was falling nearly six inches a-day, and every delay increased the risks, so that the plan of operations had to be thought out carefully. The Babh-el-kebir was a channel in the rocks only some forty feet wide at parts, and the main body of the Nile poured down it with a fall of thirty feet in a few hundred yards. Half way down a *gyass* (native boat) had been wrecked some weeks before on the rocks which now formed the right bank of the channel. Its bowsprit stuck out a quarter of the way across the channel, and this added a serious danger to the passage.

On starting in the smooth upper waters the sweeps were used to give her a steerage-way and to point her head to the middle of the channel. The reis and pilot gave their orders with screams and waving of arms until the swift current caught her. The sweeps were then taken on board, and the ship was committed to Allah to do the rest.

Down we went at a furious rate through the narrow gorge in the granite bed, tearing

along till we came to the wrecked gyass, protruding its nose just far enough forward to catch the rigging and to tear the wooden walls of the starboard cabins. It was firmly wedged, and did not yield an inch as it revenged itself for its own destruction by tearing a great rent in the side of the dahabieh, and giving a twisting motion to its subsequent career. So by the time that the smoother waters at the lower level, studded with jagged rocky islets, were reached, the great unmanageable hulk, her decks lumbered with wreckage, waltzed in the most complacent manner, circling about her own axis, as she floated down and tried to knock off the rugged angles from successive rocks. At last she jammed herself high and firm upon a submerged reef.

This was the phase of the drama that I now, in the engineers' shelter, sat comparing with the conduct of our British crew.

The decks were in disorder, oars had been put out by the Arab crew, and having no intelligent guidance had only increased the waltzing motion. Every one of the hands had vied with the reis and his pilot in the loudness of their shouts. But now, stranded on the rock, at the mercy of the Nile and of Allah, the scene defied description. The reis wept, and tears poured down his cheeks. He tore his hair and beard, and I saw it pulled out by the roots in his hand. He beat his bare breast, and I believe he cursed his Maker. The crew of about thirty made a pandemonium of the ship, and were all tearing about the deck shrieking with dismay; and a half-grown youth, son of the reis, climbed on to a barrel in order to give greater force to his gesticulations as he waved his long arms about and called Heaven to witness that he had done all that man could do. This youth recalled to my mind the mad young man with gesticulating arms of exaggerated length in Raphael's picture of the Transfiguration in the Vatican. Every one of these Arabs had gone mad.

It amused me now to be able to picture this vivid contrast to the discipline of our British crew, their devoted confidence in the master, and the quiet subdued tones of the master's orders. Had the *Hasland* been manned by Chinese or Portuguese or negroes, as might well have been the case, the position would have been more critical. Here on the iron bridge deck there was no panic, no visible depression. Paddy West had still a joke left in him. The Cockney could still bandy chaff with Vaughan, the ex-yeoman of South Africa, and the engineers' mess-boy could grumble in a humorous manner at the disturbance to his culinary arrangements.

At 5 A.M. the dawn began. At first its only effect was to exhibit for the first time the violence of the seas, as the spindrift flew past, for the storm was even now, after all these hours, still on the increase. But in a very few

minutes, in spite of the black clouds overhead, its effect began to show, and the riding-light was dimmed. The distress signal N.C. was now shown by flags. The dawn came as a sort of signal of a fresh day that no one had expected to see, and of hope. But of hope in what direction? That did not matter. The effect of the dawn on the spirits of the men was magical. But on the other hand the clear view of these lofty, closely-packed waves, capped by white combers, was alarming, and to a mere land-lubber like myself the idea of launching a boat in that sea seemed to be madness.

The skipper, however, very soon thought it unwise to waste time. He had accomplished his purpose, by strength of will exerted during the last eight hours, of keeping the sinking ship afloat till daylight, and of restraining the desire of the men to leave. The steam-pumps were still working, but the chief had been summoned on deck for the moment, and here he stood with his usual all-in-the-day's-work sort of air, smoking a cigarette after his superhuman labours and ready to lend a hand in any fresh work.

All hands were now set to work on the starboard lifeboat, for it was still impossible with this sea to dream of launching the port lifeboat on the weather side. Charlie the bo'sun, and two sailors, were ordered into her. There was some competition for the privilege, concealed by implicit obedience to the master's orders.

Slowly and with much difficulty we lowered the tackle. But before doing so buckets of oil were poured into the sea. I had never seen this operation before, and was really astounded at its wonderful and widespread effect in preventing the sea from breaking and in clearing it of white foam. The boat now hanging from the davits over the sea, the men in oilskins all girded with their life-belts, the list to starboard, now much increased, the ship rolling heavily, and the wind shrieking wildly, all made an impressive sight above the boiling, turbulent black water. In lowering the boat, as sometimes happens in a critical case like this, she was nearly end-on when she touched the water, and the falls would not get loose. For a moment it looked certain that the three men must inevitably be dropped out of the boat. But no, it came right in the end, and the launch had been completed in a very few minutes, and extremely well done—far better than I had thought possible with a modern-tramp crew.

But the danger to the occupants of this lifeboat was by no means over when it was launched. The ship herself was not only rolling violently against the boat, but was also drifting with the wind at a high speed, and knocking against the boat in her lee, threatening to upset her, and it was all the men in her could do to stave her off. In a moment O'Hara grasped the situation, unusual and surprising as it was. He seized hold

of the painter and led the boat forward along the ship's side round the stem, and fastened her to windward of the fo'c'sle head where she seemed to be drifting with a very strong set to windward, so rapid was the ship's drift to leeward. He did all this in a most matter-of-fact way, as if he were constantly in the habit of preferring to fasten a boat on the weather side of a ship. It was a critical moment, and he rose to the occasion.

Shortly afterwards the captain went on to the fo'c'sle head and gave instructions to the men in the boat. He was able to do this only by using the megaphone, a hollow cone, three feet long, with a diameter at its mouth of eighteen inches. He saw that the boat was riding very badly, and he told them to put out the sea-anchor astern. They did this with good effect. Each of the boats had been provided by the captain's orders with a sea-anchor or drogue, made of canvas of the shape and size of a landing-net, with a rope to fasten it to the boat's stern. This, acting as a drag, prevented the boat from gyrating, and kept her painter taut and her stern towards the seas.

By 7 A.M. the wind and sea had increased, and the white breakers were so threatening that O'Hara and I feared at each moment to see the boat capsize. He shouted through the megaphone to Charlie to put out an oiled rope to save the boat, and this was done. It was only with difficulty that he could make himself heard. Still the danger to these three men and the boat was appalling, and the captain resolved to try to get the men out of her again. For fully half an hour or more he endeavoured to do this, and found it was impossible to get them back again. The boat was fifty or sixty feet away. He could make himself heard through the megaphone, but owing to the wind they had to haul the boat with great difficulty close up to the ship before he could hear what they said. It was to the effect that they would prefer remaining where they were and taking their chance rather than return to the sinking ship. But of course if the boat were smashed the whole crew would go.

Having done all he could for the men in the starboard lifeboat, the captain told the mate to take a cast of the lead. The depth was sixty-five fathoms. This enabled him to test the drift of the vessel, and confirmed the observation he had made in connection with the apparent drift of the boat.

The mate and I were discussing the prospects of finding room in the boat or boats for all the crew, and he said: "I have been saying to the ole man that the small boat on the starboard side is not fit to live in this sea, and if we could swing out the port lifeboat in its davits against this wind we might be able to lower her with the full complement of men in her. There is always the chance that we should all find ourselves swimming in the

water, but I believe it is our best chance. Some of the men would not be able to get into the starboard lifeboat; and anyway one boat will not hold us all."

About this time I found the engineers' mess-boy, who had been very cheerful, in a terrible state of gloom because, if you please, the galley-fire was out and he could get no water to make the men's breakfast. The contrasts of sentiment that came to the front in these long hours tickled the humorous part of a man to a surprising extent. I talked for a little with the boy, and we went into the chief's room where a canary in its cage was hanging up. The boy gave it some water and seed and we took it outside, hung it in the rigging, and opened the door of the cage, "to give the poor thing a fighting chance," as the boy said.

A fortnight ago, after our long stay at Hornillo, when I rejoined the ship I found that nearly every man on board had bought a canary or a cross with a goldfinch called a mule. The inhabitants of Hornillo lived mostly in some two hundred caves cut in the rock of the coast. Several of these caves had neat and prettily furnished rooms. They were a lawless set, who refused to pay taxes, and who supplied the firemen with canaries, strong drink, and other inducements to pass the time and spend their money. Generally, in the early morning before a ship sailed, you might find one or two of these men overcome on their way to the ship and sound asleep, and in every case with a bird-cage clutched to their breast. Our men had all been tempted by the birds if not by the strong drink, and on a bright sunny day you could see a lot of these cages hanging in the rigging and all over our ship.

Now, the example set by the mess-boy was followed by the others, and very soon the cages of the birds with open doors were hanging all round, and for the remainder of our time on board we had a flight of canaries and mule birds over the decks, waiting, like us, on the doomed ship. We never saw them again, but they might easily get blown ashore, nor did we see later the two pigeons with clipped wings, given to the steward by the coastguardsman's wife at Hornillo, nor the few cocks and hens in a coop. They were all set free, but that could not help them much.

By 8 A.M. the water in the stokehold had reached the furnace of the port boiler, the only one still working. From this time there could be no more pumping. The engineer now left the engine-room after his strenuous exertions all alone for so many hours. By this time the water in the holds was up to the 'tween-deck beams, and the list to starboard was not so severe. It became more possible to walk the deck without holding on. But the bow was deeply immersed, and the stern very high up.

About 10 A.M., so far as I can guess, the seas sensibly diminished, and the water that

was in the hold eased her rolling. The captain determined to get as many men as he could into the starboard lifeboat. For this he set up with his own hands a special contraption, so that they could go in over the bow. He rigged up a spar sticking out some six feet from the rail, with a foot-line, and a line hanging from its end so as to let the men climb down and drop into the boat if it could be brought up to the proper place, — not an easy matter with the rough sea and the drift. O'Hara tested this himself by going along the spar to the extreme end before he allowed any of the men to make use of it. Then he gave the crew their choice of getting into the starboard lifeboat in this way, or getting into the port lifeboat, which he was now going to try to launch full of men. The firemen refused to use the spar he had rigged up, and before letting any one leave the ship he had to employ them to help in swinging the port lifeboat in the davits, as, being on the weather side, this operation required the efforts of every man that could be made available. This experiment of launching the boat on the weather side full of men, without getting her stove in or upset, was a difficult and dangerous experiment, and everyone was quite prepared to find all the occupants of the boat struggling in the water.

The wind was so violent on this side that we had the utmost difficulty in getting the davits swung out. We all worked as hard as we could, and after many failures we at last succeeded. The mate and six or eight men were now all ordered into the boat. Before lowering it, O'Hara had suggested to me the advisability of my joining these men, because the alternative involved a severe gymnastic effort and considerable risk. I replied that I was either going in the starboard lifeboat with him or not at all, and that he might trust me to find my way by some means into it.

Then the lowering operation began. First, as oil was plentiful, we poured two bucketsful over the side, and the calming effect extended some fifty yards and lasted with full influence for at least five minutes. Then the captain and a sailor, with my slight help, lowered the tackle, only a small bit at a time, so as to keep the boat level. Down and down, step by step, went the boat, the men in her pressing against the ship's side to prevent her from being smashed. By luck she touched the water at a level place. She floated. The falls were released, and the launch was completed as perfectly as if we had been in harbour. It was a great relief, for if these poor fellows had gone in they would have had a bad time in the boats, soaking wet, even if we could have rescued them. Nearly all the sailors and firemen were now in the boats with the two mates and not a life lost so far.

Then the captain turned to me to ask if I would try to climb down the rope into the starboard lifeboat. He was

very apologetic. Always when going ashore over a plank or climbing the rope-ladder he had been most kind in helping me or in carrying my stick for me, having a great respect for my years. To have to ask me to squirm along the spar and to slide down a rope, to dangle there until the boat should manage to get underneath, and then to drop into it, seemed to him quite unsuited to a man of my age. I confessed to a feeling that I could have done it better in the good old college days when I held my own in the gymnasium. But I strapped on a cork life-belt and got ready.

He first sent an A.B. down as an example, and though he did not make a good job of it he got into the boat safely. Then in fear the captain watched my progress. I scrambled along the spar in preference to walking the foot-rope. The end was six feet out, and I got hold of the hanging rope, twisting it over one foot and under the other as we used to do as boys. But O'Hara called out, "No, you have got it wrong. Twist it round your leg." No doubt his way was the best, and I tried, only with the effect of wasting time and muscle till I had to tell him "I can't hold on a moment longer." Afterwards he told me his heart went into his boots at these words, as the boat was forty or fifty feet away, the men pulling ineffectually on the painter and steering with an oar in the stern to try to get it into position. My only plan seemed to be to drop into the sea in the hopes of being picked up. But before doing this I looked down, and in a fraction of a second planned a gymnastic feat for which I am sure I deserve credit. The boat with its sea-anchor seemed to be drifting strongly to windward of the ship. Caggett, the man in the bows, was hauling at the painter to get the boat near me, and the rope was intensely taut. Waiting a bare half-second, I saw this tightening rope come right under me, and I slid down my own rope as quick as I could and rode on the boat's painter cross-legged; then, still using my own rope to keep myself right-end up, I let myself slide on the painter like a toboggan, and so on a graceful catenary curve I shot with great force right on to the chest of the man in the bows who was hauling on the rope. I landed all in a heap without hurting him, amid shouts of congratulatory laughter from all hands.

The skipper, so soon as I was in the boat, got a rope and lowered some of my property in turn. It was an absurdly difficult task to get the boat under his rope, and it took a long time. First came my fur coat, which was much needed; then the Gladstone bag, the fur rug in which he had wrapped the log-book, a binocular, and a telescope I had given him, and four Bengal lights. These last I put in my pockets, in the hope they might keep dry. Then the hand-bag containing his papers and money, then some supplies, then the megaphone and a

bottle of whisky. He passed things in the same way to the other boat.

My muscles were badly strained, for I found that they were not so good at rope-climbing as they were forty years ago. In sliding down the rope, too, the sides of the finger-nails had been wrenched from the flesh, and they bled freely. But the one thought that was uppermost and filled me with surprise was that, although a mere landsman who had never seen a boat in such a sea, I had a feeling of security and hopefulness utterly opposed to the feelings five minutes before and for hours previously on the sinking ship with its nose pointing downwards. The sea was still very high, though past the worst, and the oil prevented the breakers from swamping the boat.

We now noted from half-hour to half-hour the steady rise of the water on the stem. The propeller was completely out of water. So we lay, the two boats hanging on to the ship by their painters, marvelling at the force with which the ship was dragging us.

It was about 1 P.M. when the cry was raised of a ship in sight. How the men's faces brightened at the thought of being spared a night in the boats! "Is she coming to us?" How anxiously we all watched. At first we saw only the tops of her masts. In five minutes we saw them far lower down, and also the funnel. "Hurrah! She has seen us." Next we could see her decks. So, even if she could not see our signal of distress in the haze, she must be able to see our boats in the water, and to know we are in trouble. All looked well for a minute. Then she turned and steamed on in another direction and was gone.

It was now that a violent rain-storm commenced, and the sea moderated a good deal. The captain thought that there would be little difficulty in getting into or out of the boats at the lee-side, as the water-logged ship had ceased her violent rolling. We tried and found it easy enough to board her by the rope-ladder, for there was now no great height to climb, so rapidly had she been sinking. We all got out except two or three, and the boats were again passed round to the ship's port-bow.

The skipper showed me on the general chart of the Mediterranean our probable place. He noted that we were probably forty or fifty miles from a part of the coast near the Spanish frontier, and that, going with the wind, we might make Port Vendres on a west-south-west course. He had himself taken a second cast with the lead, and found fifty fathoms.

We had not been an hour on board again when the rise of water in the foreholds was ominous. There was also water enough in No. 3 hold, aft of the engines, to cover the tunnel. Then a time came when the water was flush with the hatchways forward and level with the sea outside, the whole fore-deck being awash.

At 2.30 P.M. every one got into the boats, an easy enough task now. The captain went off to take a last look round—the only man on board,—and was loath to leave; but we shouted to him to come, as the ship showed signs that looked as if she was on the point of plunging down.

And so we left the old ship to her fate, but the master could not leave the place until she should founder. We caught hold of the rope from the ship's bow and made it fast to our boat, the bow-man having a hatchet ready to cut us adrift when the ship should go down.

Each of the boats carried a boat's lamp. We also had one used for signalling, and at the last moment Caggett had secured the ship's riding-light. Each boat had also a fine new 4-inch boat's compass fresh from the makers, not yet stripped of its packing, and also brand-new breakers for water. The breakers had been filled at Hornillo a fortnight ago. O'Hara was pleased about this. He said to me the men objected to the work, but he told them, "It is you who may have to drink it, and you may be sorry some day if you can't get fresh water." We also carried oil.

From 2.30 P.M. we hung in contact with the doomed hulk, nine in the mate's boat, ten in ours, painfully watching the dying moments of our old friend, always expecting the next minute to be the last. Now she rolled quite slowly, and the depth of her nose in the sea did not increase. She *would* not go down.

At 4 P.M. there was an unmistakable movement of the hull, a kind of sob, and a lurch of the fo'c'sle head. The order was given to cut the painter, and we rowed some fifty yards ahead of the ship's stem, to avoid the suction. Then occurred what seemed to be the most wonderful sight ever seen by mortal man, though perhaps it is not uncommon,—I don't know.

She gave a queer lurch; then she slowly bowed her head—down, down,—the fo'c'sle under the sea. The foremast was seen inclining towards us with a stately regular bow. The water-level receded on her forward deck. She did not plunge forward, but turned on a pivoting line amidships. Meanwhile the mainmast was seen to be also making its bow, and at the same time rising bodily in the air above the foremast. The water rose up on the foremast, and it sank beneath the waves and disappeared; and now the stern itself of the ship was seen towering above and rising higher and higher, while the foreshortened mainmast took a horizontal position in mid-air above us. The bridge dipped under water, and the funnel made its bow. At this time all the loose gear on deck, and the accommodation ladder on the poop, slithered down the whole length of the deck into the sea. In thirty seconds from the beginning she was up on end, all the half of the ship forward from the engines under the sea—the mainmast high up in the air pointing towards us horizontally, the funnel a few

feet above water lying horizontally, so that we looked on the level right into its black circle,—and all the remaining half of the ship, 150 feet up to the stern, was reared bolt upright and vertical like a lighthouse, exactly facing us, with the mast foreshortened, the hatches like great upright doorways crossed lengthways by the booms,—the small boat still on the chocks now vertical,—the winches—the steps at the break of the poop (I could see the glittering brass)—the clean planking of the poop with its wheel cover, skylight, companion, and meat-safe, the bollards and the ventilators of the mates' rooms,—all set upright in one marvellous plan of half a ship. So she rested steadily without a movement sideways or downwards for a period of five seconds.

Then as we looked down the funnel, first it was lapped by the waves, and then flooded by the sea pouring into its lip like a cascade. There was a noiseless burst or explosion in the stokehold, and a black cloud of smoke and coal dust filled the air. A bulkhead had given way, and the confined air had escaped. Her descent was slow at first, and, with the increasing velocity you notice at a ship's launch, she descended plumb downwards. In ten seconds from the explosion her vertical plunge was over and the stern disappeared. A few seconds later great baulks of timber that had been sucked down shot up from the foam some thirty or forty feet into the air and fell again, and all we could see was a great white whirlpool of floating wreckage.

A few migratory birds—I noted two swifts and a hoopoe—that in their flight from Africa had visited our ship, took a last turn round the boats, then flew off to the land of Europe.

And now no time was lost in stepping the masts and setting our lug-sails. The skipper stripped the compass of its packing and took his bearings. Then he shipped the rudder—a feat that in a high sea always seems to me one of great uncertainty. The oars and other gear were roped and fixed amidships. A lifeboat has not much room, and we were all pretty well jammed together. The sailors were glad to be doing something and took turns in bailing, for the boat leaked badly.

The gale, though less, was still lashing the sea in a way that made me wonder at the ability of the boats to live in it, and at the skill of the captain and mate in preventing them from being broached to. With our lug-sail up and no reefs in it we simply flew before the wind, and after the tension of the last eighteen passive hours there was a degree of exhilaration in this mad race before the wind that was positively enjoyable in spite of, or perhaps partly because of, the danger. O'Hara kept his eye on the overtaking waves, and his frequent call of "look out!" brought a moment of excitement as the swish of the breaker came upon us when we reached the crest of a wave and got the full force of the

gale on to the sail, driving us at a speed of over fifteen knots. In the hollows of course we went slower. The two boats with their lug-sails kept well together, averaging fully seven knots, but whenever one was delayed from any cause, everything gave way to the captain's resolve to keep together and not be separated, as the mate's boat had no knowledge of the coast or its lights.

The course for Port Vendres was dead before the wind, if the captain's estimate of our position was correct, but on neither tack were we able to make the exact course. The starboard tack suited best, and we ought to make a point on shore north-east of our goal if we were right.

So soon as we were well started the captain ordered a sip of grog all round. And here the first difficulty arose. There was no pannikin. True, we had a bailer—we could not live without it. From the moment the boat was launched bailing was continuous all day and all the next night. But the steward, after a moment's pause, said, "I think I have something that will do." He opened the sack containing his store and drew out a small plum-pudding in a china dish. The dish would do to drink out of, and we ate the plum-pudding. The breaker of water was now broached, and when some water was poured into the white dish it was black. Moreover, it stank abominably. We had nothing to drink. O'Hara's precaution at Hornillo, on which he had prided himself, was futile. We put it down to the new breakers that had been supplied for the present voyage. It was a great blow to all, but they took it very well. They each got a sip of whisky, but without any water no one cared to eat much of whatever provisions we had.

Of course there was danger every minute. It seemed like a miracle that our small boat could have come safely even so far as we had come in such a sea.

We sighted land ahead through the haze when night was just falling on us. But we saw no sign of our objective. There was high land, and we thought there was a semaphore station on the heights. The captain went to the north-east for a little, but saw no sign of a lighthouse even when darkness came on. Then for a few minutes a light was seen faintly. The captain was sure it was not Fort Béarn's three flashes every twenty seconds, and after I had held the lamp for him to consult the torn-out pages of his lights-book, he determined to cruise along the coast in the other direction. So we felt our way along until 8 P.M. It was pitch dark and very cold. Luckily the sea had gone down very much and the wind was less violent, but there was a thick haze and soaking rain, with lights from a cottage close to us on shore and a roar of breaking surf. We tried to light one of the Bengal lights, but it had got wet. It appeared that we must pass the night here. We drew a little farther from the sound of surf, and tied our painter to the

stern of the mate's boat, as he had the best sea-anchor. Ours had been torn to shreds in the terrible weather when the boat was first launched.

In this way we passed the hours in drenching rain from 8 to 11 P.M. What weary work it was! Every half-hour the captain would ask the chief for the time, and then tell him that his watch had stopped. How soaked we all were, and how cold and cramped in our limited space! We ate a little at times, and thrice in the night a spoonful of whisky was served out, with a slice of cheese. It was almost impossible to get a light when we wanted to smoke, and to some of us this was a great loss. People certainly should never go to sea without having vesuvians in a water-tight case and something kept dry for striking them on.

At 11 P.M. the fog lifted, and Charlie sighted a faint light flashing three times every twenty seconds. Hurrah! Port Vendres ahoy! But for a minute O'Hara was sceptical. He said, "It is called in the book a twenty-five-mile light, and on the French coast that means a very powerful light." Finally he made up his mind that we had made a bad shot in our position on the coast, and that the light we now saw through the haze must be at least twenty-five miles off.

The captain was not long in doubt as to his intentions. No more hanging about for him. Without any chart, and with no knowledge about any dangers that might lie between us and the light, he determined to wait no longer and to sail straight for our haven. The sea had been comparatively still since sundown, luckily for us. But the rain came in torrents every now and then, and we were all cold and stiff in our cramped attitudes. The only men who ever changed their position during the sixteen hours we were in the boat were those employed in bailing, who relieved one another every quarter of an hour or so.

By the time we were ready to shape our course we could not find the mate's boat. Their lamp was out of order, and they had complained that they could not keep it alight. We were using the ship's bright riding-light, and had, in addition, a flashing-lamp for signalling. We lighted this to give them, but got no answer on hailing. The captain was a little anxious. Then we made use of the megaphone. The other boat turned up before long, and managed to keep their own light burning. So the chief, who was thinly clad and wet to the skin, took possession of the flash-lamp to put under his coat to help to warm himself. He was the man, after the captain, who most needed compensation after the frightful work accomplished all the previous night.

Our boat went ahead with the powerful light, and the mate followed on our course. Poor man! I was sorry for him; for often, when I awoke from a doze, I saw the skipper holding the tiller all right, but with his eyes fast closed. The

lighthouse at first was very faint, but being directly under Jupiter, that star made a good mark to steer by. Looking up one time, I saw Jupiter on our beam, and asked O'Hara if he had changed his mind about the light being Fort Béarn, as we seemed to be going towards the shore. "No," he replied; "it's my fault. I am afraid I was napping." We passed several lighted places on shore, and it looked tempting to try to land; but now that we were sure of the lighthouse, it was safer to make for it and to take our chance of reefs and sunken rocks.

From this time, although our present piece of navigation was the most dangerous, the tension visibly slackened. Every man of us went sound asleep for short intervals, in spite of cold and wet and cramped position. We had been having a long and anxious time during the previous two days and nights.

So the hours went by, and sometimes we wished that the wind had kept up a little more. We did about four knots an hour, and could watch our progress as we passed the lights of villages on shore. Moreover, the light ahead was growing more distinct. Some of the crowd were nearly played out with cold and wet and want of sleep. The good old steward, sixty-four years of age, lay silent and very miserable and prostrate with cold. I covered him with my fur rug, but it was soaking wet. Charlie, lying on his face, threw his head on his arms and kicked out as if he was sobbing. We all still wore the lifebelts, as they seemed to keep in the heat.

From 11 P.M. till 5 A.M. we saw the light at Fort Béarn grow stronger and stronger, and at that hour dawn commenced. Then, by the aid of our chart of Port Vendres, O'Hara got our position and steered for the harbour. For a second time in twenty-four hours we were able to feel the glow of the life-giving, stimulating dawn. It was the first moment when we could really feel that all anxiety was past.

While congratulating ourselves, a mile from shore, our mast suddenly gave out, and, breaking at the step, went overboard. What a piece of luck that this did not happen earlier! We had heard some ominous creaks when rolling about after sunset with the sail down. It was easy now to row to land, and the men were only too thankful to be free to move about and ease their cramp and gain some warmth by exercise.

A fishing-boat offered a tow, but the captain refused it, expecting them to demand exorbitant fees for salvage. A pilot-boat met us at the harbour and offered to have us towed. This was declined. The captain expected to have hours of waiting, with formalities from health and customs officers, and got out his bill of health and handed it to the officer on the quay.

But the captain was all wrong. The officers were reading the ship's papers when

I rose and asked how long it would be before we could land, as some of us would give our ears for a cup of coffee. The medical officer and the customs officer immediately said, "But why wait? Come on shore. What can we do for you? Tell us what you need. All we want to do is to help you."

Then the doctor took us across the street to a *café*, and, oh! how good that coffee was. We had been sixteen hours cramped in the boat, and I could hardly walk, and nearly tumbled down. Afterwards I confessed this to O'Hara, and he told me that he had been in the same state. For forty-eight hours on end he had been at work, and most of the time at double pressure.

It now appeared that when we were approaching the coast our lug-sails were noticed, so different from the native "lateen." So the people soon guessed rightly what had happened. Word was passed round that a shipwrecked crew was coming in, and the whole population was there to welcome us. Our men all day were heroes. They were treated handsomely in the *café* with food, and all the poor people of the place came with dry shirts and stockings and suits of clothes for the men, who had lost everything, and were very grateful. The captain told them to see that these clothes should all be returned when their own things were dry. But these poor fishing-folk, and also the leading men of the port, rebelled, and assured him they were free gifts.

The hotel took in the whole crowd at a nominal rate, and every one was asking only to be allowed to help more in any way, and they knew so well what our men needed. It was quite touching. At 9 A.M. the crew had a big meal at the hotel, and most of them slept all day till their next meal at 6 P.M.

Not a man among them had saved any of their kit — not even the captain. I felt quite ashamed of having been forced to save a few of my things. On taking them out of the boat, water streamed from them for some minutes.

The captain spent the early hours in arranging for the crew's comfort. He telegraphed to his wife, and then sent word to the owners telling them of the safety of all on board. In the afternoon he got a reply directing him to take the crew to the British Consul at Cette.

We found that there was a steamer from Algiers just come in and starting for Cette at 11 P.M. So the captain aranged to convey the crew by her. I was very sorry to part from him, but thought it wiser to stop at least one night in Port Vendres to sleep and get things dry.

Before leaving, Captain O'Hara arranged to have a notice put in the local paper expressing the gratitude of himself and crew for the kindness of everyone, and assuring them that the people of Port Vendres would always be held in affectionate remembrance.

IN QUEST OF A CURE.—III.

IN THE MIDI.

We resolved when we made up our minds to spend a winter in the South of France that there should be nothing haphazard about our arrangements on this occasion. We had had enough of happy-go-lucky ways on that fatal journey Cathal and I had made to the Spa. Now, when venturing so far into a foreign land, all should be thought out to the least detail. I studied guide-books and time-tables till I almost knew the Riviera by heart, and finally, with the help of friends, we discovered a pension that seemed just what we wanted, in a beautiful, quiet, sheltered little spot somewhere between Marseilles and Mentone. We engaged our rooms months beforehand, and except that my mother and I contrived to lose each other on the journey, we reached our destination without mishap.

After all this arrangement it was a little disappointing to discover that our long-dreamt-of home among the palms and mimosas was not quite all that we had hoped. It was certainly beautiful as any of our dreams. From quaint little windows we looked down over the tops of waving pine-trees to the Mediterranean washing almost to the garden walls. The November days were warm and sunny, and though the mistral blew every day for a month, it was pleasant to go to sleep to the sound of swishing waves and murmuring trees. But the place was really not very sheltered, and although "madame" was kindness itself, her cooking swam in oil, and the stairs in her house were many and high, and perhaps we were too near the sea, and at all events before a month was over even "madame" agreed that her delightful pension was no place for "mademoiselle." Disillusioned by the result of our foresight and arrangement, we took flight one day in the middle of a gale of wind and made for what sounded a more likely spot farther along the coast, with no notion in the world of what might befall us there. At the station where we alighted Cook's man provided us obligingly with a list of pensions, and as we drove away on a tour of exploration we felt really happy and in our element once more. We had a couple of hours before sunset, and having been warned of the sudden chill that in the Midi comes into the air at that time of the evening, we felt that our fate must be settled just half an hour before the sun dipped into the sea. Cinderella at the ball was not more dependent on the striking of a clock.

How charming everything was that afternoon! The white houses round the bay, the hills rising behind with

their grey-green olive-trees, the bright sunlight shining on the blue water! We liked everything, from the long road fringed with palms and pepper-trees to the odd-looking houses in their brilliant gardens. We liked the queerly painted blue or green or pink houses, we liked the white houses that had festoons of flowers painted upon them, we were delighted with the blue porcelain jars set up on little niches on outside walls, as if the owners had been Catholics when they began to build and designed to make a shrine for their patron saint, and had become Protestants before they finished and decided that they must put up with a jar instead.

Half a mile inland from the sea we stopped at the first pension on our list. It proved unsuitable, and after a few moments' parley we drove on again towards the hills. We stopped again, and the house was too gloomy; and again, where a poor soul in the last stages of consumption scared us away with his cough. And then we stopped at our own pension. It was built on a terrace cut out of a hillside. It had white marble steps and a porch half smothered in tea-roses. The garden was full of mimosa and orange-trees, of climbing geranium growing up the tree trunks, of heliotrope luxuriating like a weed. There were green seats under the orange-trees and summer-houses covered with creepers. There was the sweetest old lady who spoke not one word of English, and she smiled upon us and said that as it was so early in the season it was sure that she and madame would not quarrel about a price; and so just in time, before the sun began to sink into the sea, we became really installed in what were destined to be our winter quarters — inmates of the Villa Paradis.

We found ourselves in the position of guests who have arrived first at a party. The pension was empty of pensionaires, and we had the felicity of seeing them arrive in ones and twos and threes, till they overflowed from the house into the annexe, and till finally newcomers had to be turned away reluctantly from our too-attractive doors. To begin with, the two sweet-faced old ladies who owned the place, the two Swiss maids, the Provençal cook, and the youthful Italian house-boy were all engaged in ministering to our sole comfort. The old ladies had, to my eyes, a Scotch look. They wore black dresses and little black shawls, white lace collars and caps. They were, some one told us, "très dévotes"; and as I looked at them I said to myself that good old ladies were the same all the world over, and that these two fervent Roman Catholics, who with much fluttering and excitement sometimes entertained M. le Curé to tea, had the air of dear old pillars of a Scottish Kirk. That they wore it "with a difference" I was forced to admit, when on Sunday morning madame re-

turned from church *viâ* the market, green vegetables plainly peeping from a decorous little basket she carried in her hand; and still more when, on Sunday afternoon, her sister approached me with the most innocent air in the world to ask if mademoiselle would "make a little game of the Bridge"! My imagination, I confess, faltered over the parallel I had drawn. Clearly I could carry it no further.

The clientèle of the pension was cosmopolitan enough, but not English-speaking. We saw French, German, Dutch, Russian, and Spanish visitors arrive, but neither English nor Americans. By the middle of winter *table d'hôte* had become a meaningless babel of tongues to us, and the excitement and gesticulation evolved by an argument we could not follow entertained us vastly. M. K——, a vivacious little Parisian with eyeglasses and a pointed white beard, never permitted conversation to languish. He had "beaucoup beaucoup d'esprit," we were told; and certainly his wit had a marked effect on M. B——, who sat opposite to him — a typical compatriot, with his jovial face, his jet-black hair, and turned-up mustachios. He would laugh till he shook all over like a jelly at M. K——'s sallies, and argue a point with him in a tremendous big voice that completely collapsed sometimes into merriment. Two pretty dusky-haired Spanish girls from South America, who with their mother had come to spend a winter in the Old World, would gaze silently at the combatants out of their great dark eyes, smiling a little in their slow, languid way. They would sit all day doing nothing contentedly, and hardly ever went out of the garden. Yet they seemed perfectly satisfied with their winter in France, and would talk hopefully of coming back another year.

A dear Dutch lady, whose pretty hair was just beginning to be streaked with grey, would often translate for us, in the quaintest and prettiest English, the babel at *table d'hôte*. She was our chief friend among the pensionaires, and indeed seemed to be the friend and confidant of every one who came to the house. She was one of those women who carry their credentials in their faces, for one had only to look at her to be convinced that she was "a darling." It was she who knew how Madame A——, who looked so sad, had lost an only daughter but three months ago; and how Mlle. B—— suffered so dreadfully from insomnia, though she appeared so gay and bright; and M. C—— and Madame D—— had this or that, marking them out as appealing to our interest and sympathy, that of ourselves we should never have guessed at. She suffered from some malady of the heart, and could do little but lie in a *chaise longue* under the orange-trees in the garden; but what gaiety and courage were hers, and how perennially and engagingly interested she was in every-

body! It was to her, Protestant though she was, that Madame V—— confided her intention to consult St Antoine about her lost brooch. Madame V—— had of recent years become a Theosophist, but the brooch was a valuable one, and she had always been brought up to believe in St Antoine's kindness about lost property. She went up to the little church on the hill about it, and sure enough found the brooch immediately afterwards, and acknowledged the saint's kindness by a suitable donation to the village priest. She was an absent-minded old lady, however, and presently our friend heard that the brooch had gone amissing again. And, "Oh, do you think it would seem too troublesome to St Antoine if I asked his aid so soon again?" I hope our friend improved the occasion like a good Protestant; but whether or no, Madame V—— appealed once more to the obliging saint, once more the brooch reappeared, and once more the little church on the hill was the richer for madame's gratitude. I suppose we should have been shocked, but how like a fairy story it was. In the Highlands I can remember an excellent and accomplished lady who was a staunch upholder of the Free Church in her day, and who, nevertheless, sent for a wise woman on more than one occasion to unbewitch a cow! Superstition dies hard.

It was our Dutch friend who knew all about the romance that presently enthralled the Villa Paradis, the romance of a certain monsieur and that charming French mademoiselle with whom he talked so much at *table d'hôte*. With what interest the pensionaires observed the magnificent bouquets of rare flowers which Pierre with his broadest smile brought to mademoiselle's door, to be followed by fabulously expensive chocolates, for which monsieur had sent all the way to Paris. What a chill descended upon our meals when obviously something went wrong, and monsieur informed us with feeling that he was going away at once; and, when peace was restored and he changed his plans again, how merrily the babel of tongues sounded once more. Some of monsieur's expensive chocolates were presented to our Dutch friend by mademoiselle, and from thence found their way to us. Not a few of them finally reached Scotland, and were despatched at a sitting by my young brother Cathal,—an unsentimental fate monsieur could hardly have anticipated for them.

We were an ordinary enough set of pensionaires on the whole, no doubt, yet we can boast for the Villa Paradis of something uncommonly like a mystery. A lady and a young boy, apparently mother and son, arrived in it one day, and wrote themselves in the visitors' book as—well, let us say Norwegians. Later the lady told madame la propriétaire that the boy was not her son, as had at first appeared, but her pupil. A certain state and

reserve attended these two. All their belongings were marked with coronets; they never appeared save at *table d'hôte*. Some one whispered that a letter bearing a very great name had been seen on the hall table. All this was nothing remarkable, perhaps, but when it transpired that each time the lady went out without the boy she invariably locked him into his room, taking the key away with her, a considerable curiosity was aroused and much food for conversation was provided. Then the thing came to a sudden and rather dramatic end, as far as the pension was concerned. European politics were being discussed at table one day; great names were mentioned and their owners freely criticised, when of a sudden up rose the boy, white-faced, from his place at the board and stalked out of the room. The mysterious lady followed him, and presently summoned the old ladies of the house. She seemed much agitated, and said she wished to see M. L——, one of the pensionaires. When he came she showed considerable excitement. He had spoken, she said, in terms most distasteful to her pupil of a certain personage dear in their country,—he must apologise. M. L—— said he had no idea that there was any one present of the nationality referred to. He understood that madame and her pupil were Norwegians. Madame, much agitated, said they were not; monsieur must apologise. But monsieur was obstinate and refused to apologise, and next day the exalted strangers disappeared from the Villa Paradis. Confess that here was an affair most mysterious! I dare not even speculate upon it, lest I should find myself whisked away to a foreign fortress for meddling in affairs of European moment.

As the babel of tongues at *table d'hôte* began to hold more meaning for us, we found in it considerable entertainment, and we were amused to discover what a reputation for seriousness our nation had in the pension, and what capacities for being "très choqué" we were supposed to possess. Mlle. T——'s tongue would falter over the most innocent sentiments lest Madame l'Écossaise might be horrified. Our pensionaires professed a polite admiration for the English. "And in Scotland," said one, "you regard yourselves as superior, is it not?" "Ah! but you have so 'triste' a Sunday," they deplored. When my mother made a reference one day to "Trilby," her neighbour looked perplexed. "Is it some one in de Bible?" she inquired hopefully, and being enlightened, she protested that she was not so ignorant of Scripture characters as we might suppose. "No, no," she said, "I am not like Mlle. T——." She lowered her voice. "Mlle. T——," she whispered impressively, "did not know who Methuselah was,—of the great age, you know!" Mlle. T——, who had thus shown her ignorance, was a very modern young Catholic. She criticised the

priests, and declared that she only went to confession when she was away from home. "Otherwise the priest has too much power," she remarked, for all the world like a Protestant. "I mean one day to read the Bible," she said. "It is, I believe, a book 'très intéressant.'"

"But the priests, they are not all good," said some one impressively. "In travelling, I assure you I have seen priests on a Friday go into the refreshment rooms and eat of the ham sandwiches, — vraiment!"

A sweet old lady opposite became much agitated at this. "They have," she explained, "a special dispensation for travelling. It is not as you think." In her horror she made us realise what a very terrible libel had just been uttered.

On Good Friday meat was not even offered to any one at table except our Scotch and heretical selves. Even old M. K——, who seemed to have few illusions left about the Church, and M. L——, who professed himself a Freethinker, ate of a vegetable diet on that day. It seemed the last rampart between good and evil, like the keeping of the Sabbath in the Highlands.

When I went abroad in my chair to view the brilliant sunny world of the Midi, Pierre the houseboy was my charioteer. He was an engaging youth, with a broad smile and an adventurous disposition. He was delighted with the idea of taking me about, and by way perhaps of making acquaintance with the chair, he took it out one day surreptitiously, and getting into it at the top of a precipitous hill he let it run. Naturally boy and chair turned somersaults over each other in the middle of the incline, considerably to the detriment of both. My chariot had to go to a shop for repairs, and Pierre's smile was a trifle self-conscious for a day or two. This was perhaps more owing to his slightly bruised appearance than to any qualms of conscience. These he seldom suffered from. "Pierre! Pierre!" madame said sadly to him one day, "I wish you wouldn't tell so many lies." Pierre shrugged his shoulders and smiled upon her.

"Que voulez-vous, madame!" he remarked with a sort of resigned cheerfulness, "C'est dans ma famille."

The adventurous disposition was perhaps also in his family, for despite his disaster he had a little way of letting the chair go in the middle of a hill and catching it again, which was a little too much like a game of chance to suit my fancy. Otherwise Pierre was a delightful chair-boy, for he was as strong as a pony, and on the hottest day was eager for the most strenuous efforts. We explored with him the roads leading hither and thither among the grey-green olive-trees, and delighted in fields that produced roses and oranges instead of potatoes and turnips. Here utility seemed a thing less to be desired than beauty. Pierre wheeled me across the

grass one day to where a brown-skinned, dried-up-looking old man in a blue blouse was planting rose-bushes, and we asked permission to make tea under his olive-trees. He granted it readily, and talked with pride of his bit of land while we waited for our kettle to boil. It had been over three hundred years in his family, he said, and some of the gnarled, twisted, hoary-looking trees, barren now of fruit, were, he declared, a thousand years old. If this were so, they must have been planted over a hundred years when William the Conqueror came over to our islands. What strangely garbed figures of invading soldier or wandering Crusader, of medieval robber or pilgrim saint, may have rested under their shade in days past; what blood-stained or what holy hands may have plucked their olives long ago!

On occasions we went farther afield than Pierre could take me, and drove to —— to see the Battle of Flowers and the Carnival, or into the mountains for what we called the Mimosa Picnic. The Battle of Flowers disappointed me a little, I confess. The flower-decked carriages were pretty enough, and pretty sparkling faces looked out from many of them, but the flowers one flung looked pathetically wilted, and it seemed a shame to toss the little sprays of mimosa or heartsease into the dust of the road. It was pretty, but to a lover of flowers it might hardly seem worth the slaughter of so many innocents. But, perhaps, if instead of watching it all from a wheeled chair in a garden I had been one of the pretty English girls in the procession of carriages, who were so evidently out for a frolic, I might have had a different opinion.

The Carnival, however, was like a revelation of the spirit of the Midi to us. The kaleidoscope of colour, the grotesque figures of bird and beast, the masked domino-clad figures, the utter abandonment to light-heartedness of young and old, were things we could not have imagined. In the streets they no longer walked—they danced; tripping in their brilliant garbs to some ridiculously catching air, and flinging their coloured confetti and streaming paper ribbons over every passer-by. At night the town was a maze of fairy lamps, and the stars from a cloudless vault of dusky blue looked down on a people half-intoxicated with gaiety, dancing under the trees on the Place. Pierre was wild with excitement for a week beforehand, and danced there with the best. Indeed, he danced himself into a feverish cold and came home with a sore throat, which made his merry countenance just the least bit rueful for some days afterwards.

The Mimosa Picnic will linger long in our memories. We drove to it through a rugged hilly country, not unlike parts of our own Highlands, through pine woods that climbed up the hillsides, and beside mountain streams that tumbled over bare and stony

beds. And from the cool green of the pines we emerged at the hilltop into a perfect blaze of colour. The day was a brilliant one, the sky was a bright deep blue, and below us the Mediterranean shone like a sapphire, while all over the hill and dipping down the side of it to the sea the dazzling sun-kissed gold of the mimosa-trees waved in the breeze. Distant towns and villages gleamed marble white, and the houses round the bay below us might almost have been built of snow. We halted at the edge of the hill above the water, and watched the gold dip to the blue, and sniffed the fragrance in the air, and almost envied the life of the mimosa growers in the little cottages we had passed. Some of them had been lopping off branches for the flower-market as we drove along, cutting down a cartload in a short time. They lived in plain little houses under the golden trees, and looked as if they had nothing to do except gather wealth from the branches in the short spring season. We made a fire and drank tea, and our *cocher* piled the carriage high with mimosa branches, and we drove home by a different road this time, down by the water and through the sunny town to our little village among the olive-trees. Old M. K—— had bought chocolates for us that night, I remember, and he handed them round among the ladies after dinner. Sometimes he laid little buttonholes on our serviettes, going himself into the *salle à manger* before dinner to put them in their places.

Kind old M. K——! He suffered terribly from rheumatic gout, and went in great fear of becoming crippled, but he had, as the pensionaires said, "beaucoup d'esprit," and his gallant thoughtfulness contributed not a little to the geniality of the Villa Paradis. My last remembrance of him is a pleasant one. We had all assembled in the hall to say good-bye to our Dutch friend, who went away just before we did. There had been some talk of religion at *table d'hôte* a few nights before, with the unself-conscious frankness about sacred things so strange to the Anglo-Saxon. M. K—— referred to it as he said good-bye to her. "Au revoir, mademoiselle, I often think of what you said—that we do not thank the good Lord enough for everything." "Yes," said monsieur the Freethinker earnestly, "that was a good thought." Every one chorussed it. Strange, kind, volatile French folk, with their perennial gaiety and their unexpected seriousness. We said good-bye with regret to them and to the Villa Paradis.

A TIGHT PLACE.

BY SIR HUGH CLIFFORD, K.C.M.G.

THEY were sinking the fifth big cylinder of the Periyakulum railway bridge, when Bruce, the engineer in charge of the job, passed the word shoreward that he stood in need of divers.

The cylinder—a great iron tube, twelve feet in diameter, coated inside with a layer of solid concrete a dozen inches thick, and bolted together in lengths of eight feet each—had already sunk down through the mud and ooze of the river-bed to a depth of over five fathoms below the water-level. For days the heavy grab had been busy plunging down through the cylinder into the soft bottom, grasping huge mouthfuls of dirt in its steel jaws, lifting them clear, and dropping them overboard; and all the time the big metal and concrete pipe, held erect by stays and scaffolding, had subsided slowly, inch by inch, into the slime. But now, though nearly a hundred tons of rails had been stacked, spelikin-fashion, across the mouth of the cylinder to add artificially to its already tremendous weight, it could not be induced to budge. Hard bottom of a sort had been struck, but at too shallow a depth to satisfy Bruce as to its permanency. He knew from the borings that the cylinder must be sunk through this stratum and another layer of mud before the bed-rock below would be finally reached.

After a short delay two of the divers, Bunny Fitch and Tom Mair, came off in a dug-out.

They belonged to a class by no means numerous in the East—white men who perform hard manual labour for a wage; but they were further distinguished from the majority of their fellow-workers by the fact that the craft they plied is one which, even in temperate latitudes, must be reckoned among the dangerous and unhealthy trades. East or West, the element of danger remains more or less constant; but in a tropical climate the unhealthiness, discomfort, and strain of a diver's work are raised to the power of *n*.

Fitch and Mair had worked together as mates for the best part of a decade, travelling up and down the world from one engineering job to another; varying the monotony by doing a spell of salvage work here and there on sea-bottoms that were like gigantic artificial aquaria; or by putting in time at some garish tropical seaport, where they groped their way among the mooring-buoy anchors in the fouled waters of the harbour.

They were not only mates, but pals,—close pals, as men who live and work together in fair weather and rough are

bound to become if the enforced comradeship does not breed sheer, unreasoning hatred.

Fitch was a big, heavy fellow, slow in his movements and his thoughts, steady as a rock, and grudging of his few words. He had saved a good part of his pay, month in and month out, more because he had never contracted the habit of spending money than because he cherished any ultimate ambition which his slow economies were designed to gratify. He drank sparingly and never touched tobacco, not even when the eye-flies made life wellnigh unendurable to a non-smoker. He was reputed never to have been in love, nor to have so much as looked sideways at a woman.

Mair, on the other hand, was a short, dark, wiry little fellow, marvellously strong for his inches, active as a cat, and as volatile as a drop of quicksilver. His black hair grew low down upon his forehead, and his wide mouth and blunt features had in them the energy of a bull-terrier and the vivacity of a London street-Arab. He had little vice in him, but much intemperate wickedness, bred of high spirits and an overflowing vitality which sought blindly and crudely for some means of self-expression. His pleasures were few and primitive, and he wallowed in them shamelessly when the opportunity served. Fitch, panting in his wake, sought clumsily to mother and chaperon him. He had nursed him through bouts of fever and other ills, had shielded him frequently from the logical consequences of his manifold evil-doings, and had got him out of more scrapes than either cared to count.

"There's no booking-off for me," Fitch used to grumble to himself. "Not when Tom's about. It's a twenty-four hours' shift all the time, and hard at that."

Yet he took a certain vicarious pride in the other's excesses —things for which he himself had no taste; laughed with grim, slow appreciation of his mate's quickness, cunning, and ingenuity; and respected him as the better craftsman of the two. Much of their work was necessarily done in pitch darkness, the sense of touch, not the sense of sight, alone guiding them; but Mair seemed to carry an eye at the end of each nimble finger-tip. Working blindly with chisel and hammer under water, he wrought as surely and almost as quickly as if he were performing his task unhampered. Fitch knew himself to be a good, careful, and skilled workman, but he knew also that for all his plodding steadiness he was a child beside his small, mercurial mate, who could do more in a four hours' shift than he could accomplish in a shift and a half.

Arrived at the wooden staging, the two divers prepared for business. They cast aside their overcoats, kicked off their shoes, and stood revealed clad in the thick worsted sweaters, drawers, and stockings which divers always affect. Such wear for a tropical climate was

appallingly heavy and warm, and both men were already sweating freely. When inside the diving-dress the temperature of the air they breathed would soon run up to well over 90° F., in spite of the water-coolers on the air-pumps, and their work would be done in an atmosphere resembling that of the hot-room in a Turkish bath. They would, of course, be unable to wipe their faces or bodies, and while the worsted clothing would absorb most of the moisture from the latter, the red head-cap of the same material, which Bunny Fitch now proceeded to put on and to pull low down over his eyebrows, was designed to keep, at any rate, some of the perspiration out of his eyes.

With Mair's help he got into his diving-dress, fixed his helmet, and opened the valve. Lifting his leaden-soled feet painfully, he began to descend into the cylinder. With his strange globular headpiece, ungainly bulk, and slow movements, he resembled a gigantic automaton worked by reluctant and ineffectual clock-work. His bare hands, red and slightly congested by the tight rubber bands about the wrists, alone retained the mobility which we associate with the alert vitality of man. Presently the muddy waters closed over him, and a little later the air-pipe ceased to pay out. He had reached bottom, and the ladder was withdrawn to give him more room in which to move and work.

One and the best part of a second hour crept by, and Tom Mair, his back resting against the side of the cylinder, sat smoking his pipe on the staging above water-level, while his invisible mate toiled silently nearly forty feet below him. Mair's duty was merely to stand by on the chance of his mate needing his assistance. The space at the bottom of the cylinder, where Bunny Fitch was slowly chipping away the rock round the edges with chisel and hammer, was too confined to admit of more than one man working there at a time.

The hour was near midday, and the sun, soaring high in the heavens, was a white-hot disc upon which the eye could not rest for more than a fraction of a second. The sky was white-hot, too,—colourless, yet vivid with heat. The slow waters of the river, purring around the stays and staging-piles, refracted the sun-rays with a blinding intensity. There was not a square inch of shade anywhere, and the palmyra palms on the river-banks, standing ankle-deep in rank, parched underwood, lifted ragged clusters of fronds that stiffened and crackled in the dry and quivering atmosphere. Bruce and most of the coolies had gone to attend to work on one of the neighbouring cylinders. Mair could see the former moving about the staging and directing the men, clothed only in a big sun-hat, a flannel jumper, and a pair of canvas shorts. Even at that distance his face and his bare arms and legs showed black where the sun had tanned

them to the hue of confluent freckles. Mair was alone, save for the linesman—Fitch's only remaining link with the outside world — and the two Tamil coolies who had charge of the air-pump.

Even through his thick sweater, the metal of the cylinder, against which his shoulders rested, was almost unbearably hot. The sweat had dried on his face, and he could feel his eyebrows stiffening and lifting as the last minute drop of moisture was sucked out of each separate hair. The sun smote down upon him mercilessly. The refracted heat from the river struck upwards with even greater intensity under the brim of his sun-hat. It seemed to him that, beaten upon by the breath of two raging furnaces, he was being slowly grilled alive. The heat was something which had to be endured actively and consciously, like pain. Sleep, in such circumstances, was an impossibility. The brain, though cruelly alive, seemed to have become fused into a vapour too volatile for thought, and capable only of registering impressions. Every sense was dazed and reeling, yet combining with every other to appreciate the intensity of their collective suffering. Even blasphemy — Tom Mair's most ready outlet for emotion of any kind—proved comfortless. He could only sit and gasp, like the dusty crows perching with gaping beaks on the fronds of the palmyra palms.

Then suddenly, something happened. Mair at first failed to realise what that something was; but an instant later it flashed upon him that the cylinder had sunk abruptly and rapidly a matter of, it might be, a couple of feet, and then as abruptly had stopped.

He leaped to his feet and craned over the edge. The circle of muddy water within the great iron ring was strangely agitated, its surface disturbed by swirling eddies which lapped wavelike against the sides.

At the same moment came a signal from Fitch—a signal of distress — and the linesman gave tongue lustily.

Mair, already feeling for his diving-dress, sent a thin cry through the immensity of the burning daylight, calling frenziedly upon Bruce. He hardly knew, and Bruce barely heeded, the words he used. The tone of his reiterated out-cry was sufficient in itself to awaken dismay; and in a few minutes Bruce and a party of his coolies were racing toward him in a dug-out.

"Here! Help me into these damned things!" Mair cried in high excitement, fumbling the while with his diving-dress. "My mate's in trouble. What sort of trouble? Gawd knows! Careful with that ladder. No. Better let me go down without it. You may do him a hurt. The cylinder sunk — sunk sudden-like. He signalled for me. Twice he signalled. No. He ain't signalling now. Hold on, old mate, I'm coming."

Then, still calling encouragement to Fitch, oblivious of the fact that the latter was out of

earshot, he clapped on his helmet over his red cap, and his voice died away in a sort of sobbing murmur.

Bruce and the coolies helped him over the edge of the cylinder, and he sank rapidly from sight, engulfed by the muddy water.

Bruce stood looking downward, vainly straining his eyes to pierce the opacity of the surface, and speculating in an agony of suspense as to the nature of the tragedy which was hidden from him by those jostling waters. The coolies crowded together, exchanging furtive whispers and fearful glances. In the tense stillness of the noontide, over land and water the heat haze danced like a company of mocking wraiths, as though it shared with this little knot of waiting men the restless anxiety which thrilled them.

Tom Mair sank downward through the water in the cylinder, watched the wavelets wash against the eye-glasses of his helmet, and the light become obscured, fade, and disappear. He was now in dead darkness, and only his outstretched hands, touching the concrete walls to right and left, and thereby guiding and steadying his descent, kept him in contact with the outside world against which his diving-dress hermetically sealed him. Henceforth, until he regained the surface, he had the use of only one sense — the sense of touch. For the rest, he was blind, deaf, and dumb.

He felt his right foot touch presently a loosely packed heap of stones; slither on it, and come to rest against the side of the cylinder. Almost simultaneously his left foot found a resting-place, and stooping quickly with groping hands outstretched, he discovered that it was planted upon the prostrate body of his mate. This filled him with astonishment, and his first thought was that Bunny Fitch had fainted. He began to close the valve in the latter's helmet, so that the inflated dress might make him buoyant and easy to carry upward to the surface; but immediately a hand — Bunny Fitch's left hand—flew to his, grasped it, and resisted it passionately. He at once left the valve alone. Then he took up a standing position straddle-legged across his friend's recumbent body, and began rapidly running his fingers over it.

The whole of the bottom of the cylinder to a depth of nearly three feet was filled with rocks and chips—the *débris* of Fitch's chisel-work,—and on this Mair found that Bunny was lying awkwardly on his right side.

"What the devil ails him?" thought Mair. "And why won't he let me raise him?" But these were questions which his nimble fingers alone could answer for him.

Fitch was making frenzied, unintelligible movements with his left hand, but Mair's own fingers were too quick for the other to be able to seize them. Rapidly they ran down each of Bunny's legs; then up his body

to the left shoulder, along the neck, over the surface of the helmet, and squeezed themselves between the loose stones and the side of the cylinder, exploring the right shoulder and forearm. Then Tom Mair's heart stood still in his body.

In spite of his complete blindness, his sense of touch had now given to him as accurate a picture of the position in which his mate was lying as if the sight had been burned in upon his brain. The cylinder in its sudden and unexpected descent had pinned Fitch's arm to the rock below. He was lying on his side, tethered to the river's bottom by his hand and wrist, with the whole colossal weight of the cylinder serving as a fetter.

The thought of the agony he must be enduring scarred Mair's imagination like a red flame cauterising his brain, and the silence, which should have been rent with screams, became in an instant a wellnigh unendurable oppression. Yet his mind was working rapidly, and his nervous, sensitive hands were already busy searching for the hammer and chisel with which Fitch had been working. Before many seconds had elapsed he had found the latter; but the hammer, which had been in Fitch's right hand at the moment that the catastrophe befell, eluded him. It had probably been embedded by the sudden subsidence of the cylinder.

At once Mair stood erect, closed the valve of his helmet, signalling all the while for a ladder, which, when lowered to him, he placed with care, so that no part of his mate's diving-dress could be pinched by the foot of it. Then he ran up it, his body buoyant with air, and was unscrewing his front glass before the rim of the cylinder was reached.

Breathlessly he told Bruce what had occurred, bade him send for the doctor and his tools, seized a hammer, refixed his glass, and climbed down again into the cylinder.

His idea was to try to chip away the rock beneath Fitch's imprisoned arm, and thus perchance to set it free; but at the first blow he felt his mate's whole body plunge and vibrate, even through the diving-dress, with the agony occasioned by the shock. Another blow, and Mair's arm was seized in the iron grip of Fitch's left hand. With a groan of sheer despair, the former dropped his tools. If he could only speak to old Bunny, he thought miserably, perhaps he could nerve him to endure the pain which alone could bring him release. He shook himself free, and picking up his hammer and chisel, again chipped at the rock, but he felt his blow to be nervous and half-hearted, and at once Bunny grabbed him anew. Clearly the task was hopeless. The trammels set upon all his senses save that of touch—the blindness, deafness, dumbness that beset him—raised the horror of the position to a nightmare intensity. Unheard he was crying upon his Maker as lost souls may cry from the depths of Tophet. Tears mingled with the sweat that, escaping from the

cap on his forehead, was pouring down his face. His whole body was tingling and quivering with an almost insanity of rebellion against the impotence that held him powerless to aid his mate. He lacked the nerve to resume the slow chipping and chiselling of the rock which would be rendered doubly slow by his own appreciation of the agony he would be causing, and his mate's unconquerable resistance; yet upon him and upon his unshaken nerve depended, he knew, the life of his friend, aye, and his own reason.

It was a wild-eyed lunatic who presently rushed upward from the depths of the iron well, unscrewing his glass, and calling upon Bruce with inarticulate ravings and curses. The doctor was coming off, paddled by excited coolies; but though he travelled swiftly over the dazzling water, Tom Mair, pinned to the staging by his leaden-soled boots, rocked in his diving-dress, like a maddened elephant at its pickets, shook hands with writhing fingers above his head, and blasphemed with horrible vehemence, entreating him to hasten.

An idea had come to him,—had taken possession of him. He knew now what he must do; had appraised the heavy risks, and felt as if each one of them were a red-hot goad driven deep into his naked soul. A cowardly demon within him was screaming to him that his idea was impossible,—that he could not carry it out,—that he lacked the nerve,—that it was foredoomed to failure,—that it was asking more of him than could fairly be asked of any man,—that he could never muster the resolution to penetrate again into the silence and the darkness wherein his mate lay in mortal, dumb agony. He dreaded every second of delay lest this devil should gain the mastery of him, and drive him into headlong flight from the spot where, hidden by the untroubled waters, Bunny Fitch lay tethered awfully to the river's bed.

The doctor took him roughly by the shoulder and shook him vigorously. "You've got to steady yourself, if you are going to be of any use," he said angrily. "Steady yourself, do you see? And here,—drink this."

He helped Mair to pour a stiff tot of brandy down his throat, gripping his shaking hand with calm, capable fingers.

"There's nothing for it," Mair sobbed out. "I've got to cut his blooming arm off! O Gawd! That's what I've got to do, Gawd help me!"

The doctor made some rapid inquiries in a businesslike, professional manner, very soothing to Tom's lacerated nerves.

"Yes, my man," he said, when he had assured himself as to the position. "Amputation is the only chance, and you must try it; but remember, you've got to be quick—mighty quick—and you've got to be sure. As soon as you cut the rubber of his diving-dress he'll begin to drown if you bungle the job. Now, let me feel your pulse. Galloping like a race-

horse. Here. Take another drop of brandy, and pull yourself together. You're a good workman, they tell me, and you've got an uncommon ticklish job in hand. Don't bungle it. Remember your mate's life depends upon your skill and pluck. Is that the sharpest axe you've got, Bruce?"

Bruce nodded silently. He handed a short wood-axe to Mair, who felt its keen edge gingerly with his thumb. He too was silent, but as he began to screw on his glass his face was working convulsively, and tears were pouring unheeded down his cheeks.

Again the big automaton—a figure robbed magically of all outward expression of emotion—began to climb down the ladder, and presently was swallowed up again by the disturbed water. Bruce, the doctor, and the coolies stood craning their necks to gaze into the baffling depths below them.

Mair, usually so quick, moved with slow, reluctant deliberation down the ladder. The wild excitement of a few moments earlier had died down in him, and had been succeeded by a kind of cold despair. The brandy had steadied him. He was bracing himself consciously against the ordeal which awaited him down there in the place of horror whereof the terrors presented themselves every instant more and more vividly to his imagination. Vicariously he seemed to be enduring every pang that was torturing the mind and rending the body of poor Bunny Fitch in his long agony. His own arm throbbed and tingled in sympathy. In fancy he could feel the cruel shock which each blow of the chisel on the rock had dealt to his mate. Already, it seemed to him, that the still more fierce pain, which the first stroke of the axe upon yielding rubber and flesh would inflict upon Bunny, was stabbing him,—that and the panic fear of death by drowning. Yet now his will was set upon the task awaiting him. It was the only chance. He gritted his teeth together, drew his muscles taut, and nailed himself to his duty. The cowardly devil was subdued and silenced; only Mair moved slowly, seeking thereby to delude himself into the belief that he had regained his calm.

Arrived at the bottom, he once more explored with his fingers the precise position of the tethered arm. The cylinder and the rock had gripped it with a vice-like clasp a couple of inches above the wrist. The hand beyond the cylinder's edge must be lying palm-downward. Tom Mair, of course, could *see* nothing; but touch with him had become a sense almost as accurate as that of sight. At the end of three or four minutes of careful and minute groping, during which the very soul of him seemed to have passed into his finger-tips, he had obtained as exact an appreciation of the relative positions of arm, rock, and cylinder-edge as if he had examined them with his naked eye. For the rest, he was used to hitting the top of a hidden

chisel with an invisible hammer for hours a-day with force and accuracy.

He drew in his breath, and bit his under-lip hard; poised the axe, lowered it slowly, measuring his distances, and then brought it down upon Bunny's arm. He felt the blade eat deep into flesh and bone, and was conscious of the insuck of the water through the rent in the rubber casing. Also he felt Bunny quiver and flounder beneath him as the diving-dress filled with water, but he had taken the precaution to grip him with his knees to prevent active interference. Quick as light, he struck again, and yet again; knew that he had severed the arm; signalled wildly to the linesman, and felt Bunny Fitch's body suddenly snatched away from him, as the man at the cylinder's mouth drew him and his water-logged prison swiftly to the surface. The doctor, aided by Bruce, was busy tying the arteries of Bunny's arm by the time Mair had succeeded in scrambling up the ladder and had unscrewed his glass.

"A very clean bit of surgery," the doctor remarked cheerfully, a few moments later, "though I'll make a better job of it presently when I get him ashore. Well done, young man! You've saved this fellow's life."

But Tom Mair did not hear him. Still in his diving-dress and looking like some strange mechanical toy which had strayed out of a giant's nursery-cupboard, he was sitting on the staging with his big head between his bare hands, rocking his body to and fro, and weeping as little children weep.

HOCKEN AND HUNKEN.

A TALE OF TROY.

BY "Q."

CHAPTER XIV.—THE LETTERS.

HAVING breakfasted, read his newspaper, and smoked his pipe (and still no sign of the missing 'Bias), Cai brushed his hat and set forth to pay a call on Mr Peter Benny.

This Mr Peter Benny—father of Mr Shake Benny, whose acquaintance we have already made—was a white-haired little man who had known many cares in life, but had preserved through them all a passionate devotion to literature and an entirely simple heart: and these two had made life romantic for him, albeit his cares had been the very ordinary ones of a poor clerk with a long family of boys and girls, all of whom—his wife aiding—he had brought up to fear the Lord and seen fairly started in life. Towards the close of the struggle Fortune had chosen to smile, rewarding him with the stewardship of Damelioe, an estate lying beside the river some miles above Troy. This was a fine exchange against a beggarly clerkship, even for a man so honest as Peter Benny. But he did not hold it long. On the death of his wife, which happened in the fifth year of their prosperity, he had chosen to retire on a small pension, to inhabit again (but alone) the waterside cottage which in old days the children had filled to overflowing, and to potter at literary composition in the wooden outhouse where he had been used, after office hours, to eke out his £52 salary by composing letters for seamen.

He retained his methodical habits, and Cai found him already at work in the outhouse, and thoroughly enjoying a task which might have daunted one of less boyish confidence. He was, in fact, recasting the 'Fasti' of Ovid into English verse, using for that purpose a spirited, if literal, prose translation (published by Mr Bohn) in default of the original, from which his ignorance of the Latin language precluded him. For a taste:—

"What sea, what land, knows not Arion's fame?
The rivers by his song were turned as stiff as glass:
The hungry wolf stood still, the lamb did much the same—
Pursuing and pursued, producing an *impasse*—"

But while delighting in this labour, Mr Benny was at any time ready, nay eager, for a chat. At Cai's entrance he pushed up his spectacles and beamed.

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"Ah, good morning, Captain Hocken!—Good morning! I take this as really friendly.... You find me wooing the Muses as usual; up and early. Some authors, sir,—not that I dare claim that title,—have found their best inspirations by the midnight oil, even in the small hours. Edgar Allan Poe—an irregular genius—you are acquainted with his 'Raven,' sir?—"

"His what?"

"His 'Raven'; a poem about a bird that perched itself upon a bust and kept saying 'Nevermore,' like a parrot."

Cai winced. "On a bust, did you say? Whose bust?"

"A bust of Pallas, sir, in the alleged possession of Mr Poe himself: Pallas being otherwise Minerva, the goddess of Wisdom, usually represented with an Owl."

"I don't know much about birds," confessed Cai, reduced to helplessness by this erudition. "And I don't know anything about poetry, more's the pity—having been caught young and apprenticed to the sea."

"And nothing to be ashamed of in that, Captain Hocken!

'The sea, the sea, the open sea—
The blue, the fresh, the ever free.'

I daresay you've often felt like that about it, as did the late Barry Cornwall, otherwise Bryan Waller Procter, whose daughter, the gifted Adelaide Anne Procter, prior to her premature decease, composed 'The Lost Chord,' everywhere so popular as a cornet solo. It is one of the curiosities of literature," went on Mr Benny confidentially, "that the author of that breezy, not to say briny outburst could not even cross from Dover to Calais without being prostrated by *mal de mer;* insomuch that his good lady (who happened, by the way, to survive him for a number of years, and, in fact, died quite recently), being of a satirical humour, and herself immune from that distressing complaint, used—as I once read in a magazine article—to walk up and down the deck before him on these occasions, mischievously quoting his own verses,—

'I'm on the sea, I'm on the sea!
I am where I would ever be:
I love (oh, *how* I love!) to ride
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,'

et cætera. You'll excuse my rattling on in this fashion. So few people in Troy take an interest in literature: and it has so many by-ways!"

"I'm afraid," confessed Cai, more and more bewildered, "that my education was pretty badly neglected, 'specially in literature, though for some reason or another I'm not bad at spellin'. But, puttin' spellin' aside, that's just why I've come to you. I want you to help me with a letter, if you will."

"Why, of course I will," instantly responded Mr Benny, pushing his translation of the 'Fasti' aside and producing from a drawer some sheets of fresh paper.

"As a matter of business, you understand?"

"If you insist; though it will be a pleasure, Captain Hocken, I assure you."

"It's—it's a bit difficult," stammered Cai gratefully. "In fact, it's not an ordinary sort of letter at all."

Mr Benny, patting his paper into a neat pad, smiled professionally. The letter might not be an ordinary sort of letter; but he had in old days listened some hundreds of times to this exordium.

"It's—well, it's a proposal of marriage," said Cai desperately; and in despite of himself he started as he uttered the word.

Mr Benny, having patted up the pad to his satisfaction, answered with a nod only, and dipped his pen in the inkpot.

"I don't think you heard me," ventured Cai. "It's a proposal of marriage."

"Fire away!" said Mr Benny. "Just dictate, or give me the main bearings, and I'll fix it up."

"But look here—it's a proposal of marriage, I tell you!"

"I've written scores and scores. . . . For yourself, is it?"

This simple and indeed apparently necessary question hit Cai between wind and water.

"I want it written in the first person, of course—if that's what you mean?"

Again Mr Benny nodded, "I see," said he. "You're here on behalf of a friend, who is too bashful to come on his own account."

"You may put it at that," agreed Cai, greatly relieved. "I told you the case was a bit out o' the common!"

Mr Benny's smile was still strictly professional. "It's not outside of my experience, sir; so far, at any rate. May I take your friend to be of your own age, more or less?"

Cai nodded. "You're pretty quick at guessin', I must say."

"A trifle rusty, I fear, for want of practice. . . . But it will come back. . . . Now for the lady. Spinster, or widow?"

"Does that matter?"

"It helps, in a letter."

"We'll put it, then, as she's a widow."

"Age? . . . There, there! I'm not asking you to be definite, of course: but to give me a little general guidance. For instance, would she be about your friend's age? Or younger, shall we say?"

"Younger."

"Considerably?"

"I don't see as you need lay stress on that."

"You may be sure I shall not," said Mr Benny, jotting down "Younger, considerably" on his writing pad. "Moreover we can tone down or remove anything that strikes you as unhappily worded in our first draft. Trade, profession, or occupation, if any?" Seeing that Cai hesitated, "The more candid your friend is, between these four walls," added Mr Benny, extracting a hair from his pen, "the more persuasive we are likely to be."

"You may set down that she keeps a farm."

"Independent means?"

"Well, yes, as it happens. Not that——"

"To be sure—to be sure! When the affections are engaged, that doesn't weigh. Not, at any rate, with your

friend. Still it may influence what I will call, Captain Hocken, the style of the approach. Style, sir, has been defined by my brother, Mr Joshua Benny—You may have heard of him, by the way, as being prominently connected with the London press. . . . No? A man of remarkable talent, though *I* say it. They tell me that for lightness of touch in a Descriptive Middle, it would be hard to find his match in Fleet Street. . . . As I was saying, sir, my brother Joshua has defined style as the art of speaking or writing with propriety, whatever the subject. By propriety, sir, he means what is ordinarily termed appropriateness. Impropriety, in the sense of indelicacy, is out of the question in—a—a communication of this kind. Strict appropriateness, on the other hand, is not always easy to capture. May I take it that your friend has—er—enjoyed a seafaring past?"

Cai gazed blankly at him for a short while, and broke into a simple hearty laugh.

"Why, of course," said he, "you're thinkin' of my friend 'Bias Hunken! I almost took ye for a conjuror, first-along—upon my word I did. But once I get the drift o' your cunning, 'tis easy as easy." He gazed at Mr Benny and winked knowingly.

"You may tell me, if you please," replied Mr Benny, himself somewhat mystified, but playing for safety. "You may tell me, of course, that 'tis not Captain Hunken but another man altogether: as different from Captain Hunken as you might be, for instance."

Cai started. He was not good at duplicity, but managed to parry the suggestion. "We'll suppose it *is* my friend, 'Bias," said he; "though 'Bias would be amused if he heard it."

"Very well—very well indeed!" Mr Benny laid down his pen, rubbed his hands softly, and picked up the pen again. "Now we can get to work. . . . '*Honoured Madam*'—Shall we begin with 'Honoured Madam'? Or would you prefer something a trifle more—er—impassioned? Perhaps we had better open—er—warily—if I may advise, and (so to speak) warm to our subject. . . . There is an art, Captain Hocken, even in composing and inditing a proposal of marriage. . . . '*Honoured Madam—You will doubtless be surprised by the purport of this letter—*' Will she be surprised, by the way?"

"Cert'nly," Cai answered. "We agreed this is from 'Bias, remember."

"Yes, yes. . . . She will like it to be supposed that she's surprised, any way. All ladies do. '*—as by the communication I find myself impelled to make to you.*' I word it thus to suggest that you—that Captain Hunken, rather—cannot help himself: that the lady has made, in the most literal sense, a conquest. A feeling of triumph, sir, is in the female breast, whether of maiden or widow, inseparably connected with the receipt of such a communication. Without asking Captain Hunken's leave—eh?—we will flatter

that feeling a little—and portray him as the victim of this particular lady's bow and spear. A figurative expression."

"Oh!" said Cai, who had begun to stare. "Well, go on."

"'*Surprised, I say; yet not (I hope) affronted; in any event not unwilling to pardon, recognising that these words flow from the dictates of an emotion which, while in itself honourable, is in another sense notoriously no respecter of persons. Love, Honoured Madam, has its votaries as well as its victims. I have never accounted myself, nor have I been accounted, in the former category*—'"

"What's a category?" asked Cai.

Mr Benny scratched out the word. "We will substitute 'case,'" said he, "and save Captain Hunken the trouble of an explanation. '*I am no longer—you will have detected it, so why should I pretend?—in the first flush of youth: no passionate boy*—We are talking of Captain Hunken, remember."

Cai nodded. "It's true as gospel, Mr Benny. But you have a wonderful way o' putting things."

In this way—Mr Benny scribbling, erasing, purring over a phrase and anon declaiming it—Cai venturing a question here and there, but always apologetically, with a sense of being carried off his feet and swept into deep waters—in half an hour the letter was composed. It was not at all the letter Cai had expected. It threw up his suit into a high romantic light in which he scarcely recognised it or himself. But he felt it to be extremely effective. His conscience pricked him a little, as in imagination he saw 'Bias, with head aslant and elbows sprawling, inking himself to the wrists in literary effort. Poor 'Bias. But "all's fair in love and war."

To his mild astonishment Mr Benny declined a fee. "If, sir, you will be good enough to accept it, as between friends?" the little man suggested timidly. "You have helped me to pass a very pleasant morning: and it will be—shall I say?—something of a bond between us if, in the event, our joint composition should prove to have been instrumental in forwarding—er—Captain Hunken's suit."

Cai hesitated. At that moment he would have preferred conferring a benefit to receiving one. His conscience wanted a small salve. Yet to refuse would hurt Mr Benny's feelings.

"I'll tell you what!" he suggested: "We'll throw it in with another favour I meant to ask of you, and for which you shall name your terms. It has been suggested—by several, so there's no need to mention names—that I ought to go in for public life, in a small way, of course."

"Indeed, Captain Hocken?' Mr Benny smiled to himself; he began to understand, or thought that he did. "A very laudable ambition, too!"

"The mischief is," confessed Cai, "that I've had no practice in speakin'. I couldn't, as

they say, make a public speech for nuts."

"It is an art, Captain Hocken," said Mr Benny reassuringly, "and can be acquired. An ambition to acquire it, sir,—though in your mind you viewed it but as a means to an end,—would in my humble view be an ambition even more laudable than that of shining on the administrative side of public life. For it is not only an art, sir, and a great one. It is wellnigh a lost art. Where nowadays are your Burkes, your Foxes, your Sheridans—not to mention your Demostheneses?"

"You'll understand," hesitated Cai, "that nothing beyond the School Board is in question at present. I mention this strictly between ourselves."

Mr Benny swung about upon his stool. "Listen to this, Captain Hocken—'Observe, sir, that, besides the desire which all men have naturally of supporting the honour of their own government, that sense of dignity and that security to property which ever attends freedom, has'—or, as I should prefer to say, *have*—'a tendency to increase the stock of the free community. Much may be taken where most is accumulated. And what is the soil or climate where experience has not uniformly proved that the voluntary flow of heaped-up plenty, bursting from the weight of heaped-up luxuriance, has ever run with a more copious stream of revenue, than could be squeezed from the dry husks of oppressed indigence by the straining of all the machinery in the world?' That is Burke, sir—Burke: who, by the fribbles of his own day, was lightly termed the dinner-bell of the House of Commons, yet compelled the attention of all serious political thinkers—

> 'Th' applause of listening Senates to command.'

I divine your ambition, Captain Hocken, and I honour it."

"So long as you don't mistake me," urged Cai nervously. "It don't go beyond a seat on the Parish Council at present. . . . But there was a hint dropped that you used, backalong, to give lessons in—I forget the word."

"Elocution," Mr Benny supplied it. "A guinea the course of six lessons was my old charge. Shall we say tomorrow, at eleven sharp?"

"So be it," Cai agreed. "The sooner the better,—I've to catch up the lee-way of three-quarters of a lifetime."

When Cai had folded the draft of his letter, bestowed it in his breast-pocket, and taken his departure, Mr Benny drew out his watch. It yet wanted a full hour of dinner-time. He rearranged the papers on his desk and resumed work upon the 'Fasti':—

> "The hound beside the hare held consort in the shade,
> The hind, the lioness, upon the self-same rock,
> The too loquacious crow—"

Here some one knocked at the door.

"Come in!" called Mr Benny.

The door opened. The visitor was Captain Hunken.

"Good mornin'."

"Ah! Good morning, sir!"

"Busy?"

"Dallying, sir, — dallying with the Muses. That is all my business nowadays."

"I looked in," said 'Bias, laying down his hat, "to ask if you would do me a small favour."

"You may be sure of it, Captain Hunken; that is, if it should lie in my power."

'Bias nodded, somewhat mysteriously. "You bet it does: though, as one might say, it don't lie azackly inside the common. I want a letter written."

"Yes?"

"It ain't, as you might put it, an ordinary letter either. It's,—well, in fact, it's a proposal of marriage!"

Mr Benny rubbed the back of his head gently. "I have written quite a number in my time, Captain Hunken. . . . Is it—if I may put it delicately—in the first person, sir?"

"She's the first person—" began 'Bias, and came to a halt. "Does that matter," he asked, "so long as I describe the parties pretty accurate?"

"Not a bit," Mr Benny assured him. "A friend, shall we say?"

"That's right," 'Bias nodded solemnly.

"And the lady? — spinster or widow?"

"Widow."

"Oh!"

"Eh?"

"Nothing. . . . I was considering. One has to collect a few data, you understand,—in strict confidence, of course. . . . Trade, profession, or occupation?"

"Whose?"

"Well, your friend's, to start with."

"Is that necessary?"

"It will help us to be persuasive." Seeing that Bias still hesitated, Mr Benny went on. "May I take it, for instance, that one may credit him, as a friend of yours, with a seafaring past?"

"I do believe," responded 'Bias with a slow smile after regarding Mr Benny for some seconds, "as you're thinkin' of Cai Hocken?"

Mr Benny laughed. "And yet it would not be so tremendous a guess, — hey? — seeing what friends you two are."

"It won't do no harm," allowed 'Bias after pondering a while, "if you took it to be Cai Hocken; though, mind you, I don't say as you're right."

"That's understood. . . . Now for the lady's occupation?"

"Well . . . you might make it farmin' — for the sake of argument."

"Now I wonder," thought Mr Benny to himself, "*which* of these two is lying." Aloud he began, setting pen to paper and repeating as he wrote, "'*Honoured Madam*,' — you don't think that too cold?"

"Why, are you able to start already?" exclaimed 'Bias in unfeigned amazement.

"I like to catch an inspiration as it springs to my brain," Mr Benny assured him. "We'll correct as we go on."

CHAPTER XV.—PALMERSTON'S GENIUS.

"You're welcome as blossom, my dear," said Mrs Bowldler to Fancy Tabb, who had dropped in, as she put it, for a look around. The child was allowed a couple of hours off duty in the afternoon to take a walk and blow away the cobwebs of the Chandler's gloomy house: her poor shop-drudge of a father having found courage to wring this concession from Mr Rogers for her health's sake. "You're welcome as blossom, but you must work for your welcome. Come and help me to cut bread-and-butter. . . . Palmerston! You bring the kettle and pour a little water into the teapots, just to get 'em heated."

"Company, is it?" asked Fancy, laying aside her cloak.

"Company?" Mrs Bowldler sniffed. "We've had enough of company to last us this side of the grave. Ho, I trust the name of company will not be breathed in *my* hearing for some time to come!"

"What is it, then?"

"Freaks, I hope; maggots, as my poor dear tender mother used to say; and all casting double work on the establishment. We must dine separate, all of a sudden; and now we must have our tea served separate; and from dinner to tea-time sitting in writing, the pair of us, till I wonder it haven't brought on a rush of blood to our poor heads."

"Writing?" echoed Fancy. She desisted from spreading the butter and eyed Mrs Bowldler doubtfully, pursing up her lips. "I don't like the look of that. What are they writing, do you suppose?"

"It don't become me to guess," answered Mrs Bowldler. "Belike they're making their wills and leaving one another the whole of their property."

"I hope not. They'd make a dreadful mess of it without a lawyer to help."

"They're making a dreadful mess on the tablecloth—or, as I *should* say, on the tablecloths, respectively, as the case may be. Blots. There's one or two you couldn't cover with a threepenny bit, Captain Hunken especially; and it cost four-and-ninepence only last July, which makes the heart bleed."

"They haven't quarrelled, have they?" asked Fancy.

"Quarrelled? No, of course they haven't quarrelled. What put such a thing into your head, child?"

"I don't know. . . . But I don't like this writin'; it's unnatural. And they're livin' apart, you say?"

"They didn't even breakfast together. But that was an accident, Captain Hunken having walked out early and taken the parrot."

"Funny thing to take for a walk."

"Which," explained Mrs Bowldler with a glance at Palmerston, "I had to lodge a complaint with Captain Hocken yesterday relative to its conversation, and he must have spoken about it; for Captain

Hunken went out at eight o'clock taking the bird with him, cage and all, and when he came back they were *minus*."

Fancy pondered. "What did the parrot say?" she asked.

"You mustn't ask, my dear. I couldn't tell it to anything less than a married woman."

"That's a pity; because I wanted to know, quick. I suppose, now, you haven't a notion what he did with the bird?"

"Not a notion."

"I thought not. Well, I have. He's been an' gone an' given it away to Mrs Bosenna, up at Rilla."

Mrs Bowldler turned pale and gripped the edge of the table.

"I'll bet you any money," Fancy nodded slowly.

"Ho! catch me ere I faint!" panted Mrs Bowldler.

"Why, what's the matter? She's a married woman, or has been."

"If only you'd heard——"

"Yes, it's a pity," agreed Fancy, and turned about. "Pam!"

"Yes, miss," answered Palmerston.

"Call me 'Fancy.'"

"Yes, Miss Fancy."

She stamped her small foot. "There's no 'Miss' about it. How stupid you are—when you see I'm in a hurry, too! Call me 'Fancy.'"

"Y-yes—Fancy," stammered Palmerston, blushing furiously, shutting his eyes and dropping his voice to a whisper.

"That's better. . . . What does it feel like? Pleasant?"

"V-very pleasant, miss—Fancy, I mean. It—it'll come in time," pleaded Palmerston, still red to the eyes.

"That's right, again. Because I want you to marry me, Pammy dear."

"Well! the owdacious!" exclaimed Mrs Bowldler in a kind of hysterical titter, snatching at her bodice somewhere over the region of her heart. Fancy paid no heed to her.

"Only we must make a runaway match of it," she went on, "for there's no time to lose, it seems."

For answer Palmerston burst into a flood of tears.

"There now!" Mrs Bowldler of a sudden became serious. "You might have known he's too soft to be teased. . . . Oh, be quiet, do, Palmerston! Think of your namesake!"

A bell jangled overhead.

"Captain Hocken's bell!—and the child's face all blubbered, which he hates to see, while as for Captain Hunken—there! if that isn't his bell going too in the adjoining! Palmerston, pull yourself together and be a man."

"I c-can't, missus," sobbed Palmerston. "He—he said yesterday as he'd g-give me the sack the next time he saw my eyes red."

"Well, I must take 'em their tea myself, I suppose," said Mrs Bowldler, who had a kind heart. "No, Palmerston, your eyes are not fit. But you see how I'm situated?" she appealed to Fancy.

"Do you usually let them ring for tea?" Fancy asked.

"No, child. There must be

something wrong with them both, or else with my clock," answered Mrs Bowldler with a glance up at the timepiece. "But twenty-five past four, I take you to witness! and I keep it five minutes fast on principle."

"There *is* something wrong," Fancy assured her. "If you'll take my advice, you'll go in and look injured."

"I couldn't keep 'em waiting, though injured I will look," promised Mrs Bowldler, catching up one of the two tea-trays. "Palmerston had better withdraw into the grounds and control himself. I will igsplain that I have sent him on an errand connected with the establishment."

She bustled forth. Fancy closed the door after her; then turned and addressed Palmerston.

"Dry your eyes, you silly boy," she commanded.

Palmerston obeyed and stood blinking at her—alternately at her and at his handkerchief which he held tightly crumpled into a pad; whereupon she demanded, somewhat cruelly:

"Now, what have you to say for yourself?"

He was endeavouring to answer when Mrs Bowldler came running in and caught up the other tea-tray.

"Which it appears," she panted, "he is in a hurry to catch the post; and I hope the Lord will forgive me for saying that Palmerston had just this instant returned and would go with it. But he has it done up in an envelope, and says boys are not to be trusted. When I was a girl in my teens," pursued Mrs Bowldler, luckily discovering that the second teapot had no water in it, and hastening to the kettle, "we learnt out of a Child's Compendium about a so-called ancient god of the name of Mercury, whence the stuff they put into barometers to go up for fine weather. He had wings on his boots, or was supposed to: which it would be a convenience in these days, with Palmerston's unfortunate habits. For goodness' sake, child," she addressed Fancy, "take him out somewhere, that I mayn't perjure myself twice in one day!"

She vanished.

"*Now*, what have you to say for yourself?" Fancy turned again upon Palmerston and repeated her question.

"That's what's the matter with me, miss — Fancy, I mean," confessed he, after a painful struggle with his emotions. "I never had nothing to say for myself, not in this world: and—and—" he plucked up courage—"you got no business to play with me the way you did just now!" he blurted.

"Who said I was a-playin' with you?" Fancy demanded; but Palmerston did not heed.

"And right a-top of your sayin' as writin' was unnat'ral!" he continued.

She stared at him. "What has that to do with it? . . . Besides, whatever you're drivin' at, I didn' mean as all writin' was unnatural. I got to do enough of it for Mr Rogers,

the Lord knows! But for them two, as have spent the best part of their lives navigatin' ships, it do seem—well, we'll call it unmanly somehow."

"That makes it all the worse," growled Palmerston, sticking both hands in his pockets and forcing himself to meet her stare, against which he nodded sullenly. "A man has to lift himself *somehow*—when he wants something, very bad."

"What is it you want?" asked Fancy.

"You know what it is, right enough." He glowered at her hardily, being desperate now and beyond shame.

"Do I?" But she blenched, meeting his eyes as he continued to nod.

"Yes, you do," persisted he. "I wants to marry ye, one of these days; and you can't round on me, either, for outin' with it: for 'twas your own suggestion."

"Oh, you silly boy!" Fancy reproved him, while conscious of a highly delicious thrill and an equally delicious fear. ("O, youth, youth! and the wonder of first love!") She cast about for escape, and forced a laugh. "Do you know, you're the very first as has ever proposed to me."

"I was thinkin' as much," said the unflattering Palmerston. "Come to that, you was the first as ever offered marriage to me."

"But I didn't!—I mean," urged Fancy, "it was only in joke."

"Joke or not," said Palmerston, "you can't deny it." Suddenly weakening, he let slip his advantage. "But I wouldn' wish to marry one that despised me," he declared. "I had enough o' bein' despised—in the work-'ouse."

"I never said I despised you, Pammy," Fancy protested.

"Yes, you did; or in so many words—'Unmanly,' you said."

"But that was about writing." She opened her eyes wide. "You don't mean to tell me *that's* the trouble? . . . What have you been writing?"

"A book," owned Palmerston gloomily. "A man must try to raise himself somehow."

"Of course he must. What sort of book?"

"It's—it's only a story."

"Why," she reassured him, "I heard of a man the other day who wrote a story and made A Thousand Pounds. It was quite unexpected, and surprised even his friends."

"It must be the same man Mrs Bowldler told me about. His name was Walter Scott, and he called it 'Waverley' without signing his name to it, because he was a Sheriff; and there was another man that wrote a book called 'Pienic' by Boss, and made pounds. So I've called mine 'Pickerley,' by way of drawing attention,—but, of course, if you think there's no chance, I suppose there isn't," wound up Palmerston, with a sudden access of despondency.

"Oh, Palmerston," exclaimed Fancy, clasping her hands, "if it should only turn out that you're a genius!"

"It *would* be a bit of all right," he agreed, his cheerfulness reviving.

"I have heard somewhere," she mused, "or perhaps I read it on the newspaper, that men of genius make the very worst husbands, and a woman must be out of her senses to marry one."

Again Palmerston's face fell. "I mayn't be one after all," he protested, but not very hopefully.

"Oh yes, I am sure you are! And, what's more, if you made a hit, as they say, I don't know but I might overlook it and take the risk. You see, I'm accustomed to living with Mr Rogers, who is bound to go to hell, and that might turn out to be a sort of practice."

The boy stood silent, rubbing his head. He wanted time to think this out. Such an altered face do our ambitions present to most of us as they draw closer, nearer to our grasp!

Suddenly Fancy clapped her hands. "Why, of course!" she cried. "I always had an idea, somewhere inside o' me, that I'd be a lady one of these days — very important and covered all over with di'monds, so that all the other women would envy me. You know that feelin'?"

"No-o," confessed Palmerston.

"You would if you were a woman. But, contrariwise, what I like almost better is keepin' shop—postin' up ledgers, makin' out bills, *to account rendered, second application, which doubtless has escaped your notice*, and all that sort of thing. I saw a shop in Plymouth once with young women by the dozen sittin' at desks, and when they pulled a string little balls came rollin' towards them over on their heads like the stars in heaven, all full of cash; and they'd open one o' these balls and hand you out your change just as calm and scornful as if they were angels and you the dirt beneath their feet. You can't think how I longed to be one o' them and behave like that. But the two things didn't seem to go together."

"What two things?"

"Why, sittin' at a desk like that and sittin' on a sofa and sayin' 'How d'e do, my dear? It's *so* good of you to call in this dreadful weather, especially as you have to hire. . . .' But now," said Fancy, clasping her hands, "I see my way: that is, if you're really a genius. You shall write your books and I'll sell them. '*Mr and Mrs Palmerston Burt, Author and*—what's the word?—pub—publicans—no, publisher; *Author and Publisher.*' It's quite the highest class of business; and if any one tried to patronise me I could always explain that I just did it to help, you bein' a child in matters of business. Geniuses are mostly like that."

"Are they?"

"Yes, that's another of their drawbacks. And," continued

Fancy, "you'd be a celebrity of course, which means that we should be in the magazines, with pictures—*A Corner of the Library*, and *The Rose-garden, looking West*, and *Mrs Palmerston Burt is not above playing with the Baby*, and you with your favourite dog—for we'd have both, by that time. Oh, Pammy, where *is* the book?"

"Upstairs, mostly, but I got a couple o' chapters upon me—" Palmerston tapped his breast-pocket—"If you really mean as you'd like——" He hesitated, his colour changing from red to white. Here, on the point of proving it, the poor boy feared his fate too much.

But Fancy insisted. They escaped together to Captain Hunken's garden; and there, in the summer-house—by this time almost in twilight—he showed her the precious manuscript. It was written (like many another first effort of genius) on very various scraps of paper, the most of which had previously enwrapped groceries.

"And to think," breathed Fancy, recognising some of Mr Rogers's trade wrappers, "that maybe I've seen dad doin' up those very parcels, and never guessed—well, go on! Read it to me."

"I—I don't read at all well," faltered Palmerston.

She tapped her foot. "I don't care how bad you read so long as you don't keep me waitin' a moment longer."

"This is Chapter Nine. . . . If you like, of course, I could start by tellin' you what the other chapters are about——"

"*Please* don't talk any more, but read!"

"Oh, very well. The chapter is called '*Ernest makes Another Attempt.*' Ernest is what Mrs Bowldler calls the hero, which means that the book is all about him. It begins—

> 'It was late in the evening following upon the events related in the previous chapter'

—I got that out of a paper Mrs Bowldler carries about in her pocket. It is called 'Bow Bells,' and you can depend on it, for it's all about the highest people—

> 'when Ernest rang at the bell of Number 20 Grovener Square.'

—I got that address, too, out of Mrs Bowldler. She said you couldn' go higher than that. 'Not humanly speakin'' was her words, though I don't quite know what she meant."

"But," objected Fancy, "you might want to start higher, in another book. We can't expect to live all our lives on this one: and there oughtn't to be any come-down."

Palmerston smiled and waved his manuscript with an air of mastery. He had thought of this.

"There's Royalty!"

"O-oh!" Fancy caught her breath. She felt sure now of his genius.

"We must feel our way," said Palmerston; "I believe in flyin' as high as you like so long as you're on safe ground. Of course," he went on, "there *is* a danger. I don't know who

really lives in Grovener Square at Number 20; but they're almost sure not to be called Delauncy, and so there's no real hurt to their feelin's."

"Mrs Bowldler might know."

"You don't understand," explained Palmerston, who seemed, since breaking the ice of his confession, to have grown some inches taller, and altogether more masterful. "She don't know why I put all these questions to her—sets it down to curiosity. When, all the time, I'm *pumpin'* her."

"Oh!" Fancy collapsed.

Palmerston resumed:—

"'The second footman ushered him to the boudoir, where already he had lit several lamps, casting a subdued shade of rose colour. The Lady Herm Intrude reclined on a console in an attitude which a moment since had been one of despair, but was now languid to the point of carelessness.'"

"What's a console?" inquired Fancy.

"They have one in all the best drawing-rooms," answered Palmerston. "Mrs Bowldler ——"

"Oh, go on!" She was beginning to feel jealous, or almost jealous.

"'She was attired in a gown of old Mechlin, with a deep fall and an indication of orange blossoms, and carried a shower bouquet of cluster roses, the——'

"No, I've scratched that out. It said 'the gift of the bridegroom,' and I got it from a fashionable wedding; but it won't do in this place.

'Amid these luxurious surroundings Ernest felt his brain in a whirl. He cast himself on his knees before the recumbent figure on the console which gave no sign of life unless a long-drawn and half-stifled sob, which seemed to strangle its owner, might be so interpreted.

"Lady Herm Intrude," he cried in broken accents, "for the second time, I love you."

"It's lovely, Palmerston! Lovely!" gasped Fancy. "Why was he loving her for the second time?"

"He was *telling* her for the second time. He had loved her from the first—it's all in the early chapters. . . . This is the second time he told her: and he has to do it twice more before the end of the book.

'As he waited, scarcely daring to breathe, for some answer, he could almost smell the perfume of the orchids which floated from a neighbouring vase and filled the apartment with its high-class articles of furniture, the product of many lands.'"

"Oh, Palmerston! And you that never had an 'ome of your own, since you was nine—not even a Scattered one! However did you manage to think of it all?"

She caught the manuscript from him and peered at it, straining her eyes in the dusk.

"If you could fetch a lamp now?" she suggested.

But the boy stepped close and stood beside her, dominant.

"*You* know how I came to do it," he said. "Yes—I'm glad you like it. I'll fetch a lamp. But——"

As she bent over the manuscript, he bent over and suddenly planted a great awkward kiss on the side of her cheek.

Thereupon he fled in quest of the lamp.

CHAPTER XVI.—IS IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

Cai and 'Bias supped together that night, greatly to Mrs Bowldler's relief. But they exchanged a very few words during the meal, being poor hands at dissimulation.

The meal, for the third time running, was laid in Cai's parlour, Mrs Bowldler having delicately elected to ignore the upset caused by the parrot and to treat yesterday as a *dies non*. 'Bias, if he noted this, made no comment.

The cloth having been removed, they drew their chairs as usual to front the fireplace. Cai arose, found a clean churchwarden pipe on the mantelshelf, passed it to 'Bias, and selected one for himself.

"I sent off that letter today," he said carelessly.

"Right," said 'Bias; "I sent mine, too."

"Four-thirty post, mine went by."

"So did mine."

"She'll get 'em together, then, first delivery to-morrow."

"Ay."

"That puts us all square. She'll be amused, I shouldn't wonder."

"I didn' try to be amusin' in mine," said 'Bias after a pause, puffing stolidly.

"No more did I." Cai filled and lit his pipe in silence. His conscience troubled him a little. "Well," said he, dropping into his arm-chair, "the matter's settled one way or another, so far as we're consarned. The letters are in the post, and there's no gettin' them out unless by Act o' Parliament. I don't mind tellin' you just what I said, if you think 'twould be fairer-like."

"I'm agreeable."

"You won't take it amiss that I pitched it pretty strong?"

"Not at all," answered 'Bias. "Come to that, I pitched it pretty strong myself."

Cai smiled tolerantly, and felt for the rough draft in his pocket. He fished it forth, unfolded the paper, and spread it on his knee under the lamplight. Then, having adjusted his glasses, he picked up his pipe again.

"I just started off," said he, "by hintin' that she might be a bit surprised at hearin' from me."

"That's true enough," agreed 'Bias. "She'll be more'n surprised, if I'm not mistaken."

"I don't see why."

"Don't you? . . . Well, no offence. It's a very good way to begin. In fact," said 'Bias in a slightly patronising tone, "it's pretty much how I began myself. Only I went on quick to hope she wasn't—how d'ye call it?"

"I don't know what word *you* used. *I* should have said 'affronted,' if I take your meanin'."

'Bias gave a start. "As it happens I—er—hit on that very word. I remember because it looked funny to me, spelt with two f's. But I went on to say that I meant honourably, and that she mustn't blame me, because this kind o' thing happened without respect o' persons."

Cai sat up, stiff and wondering. He took off his glasses and wiped them. "You said —*that?*" he asked slowly.

"I said a damned sight more than that," chuckled 'Bias. "I said that love had its victims as well as its something else beginning with a v, which I forget the exact expression at this moment, and that I'd never looked on myself as bein' in the former cat—no, case. You can't think how I pitched it," said 'Bias, folding his hands comfortably over his stomach. "The words seemed just to flow from the pen."

"Oh, can't I?" Cai, sitting up with rigid backbone, continued to gaze at him. "Oh, they *did*—did they? And maybe you didn' go on to explain you weren't precisely in the first flush o' youth—not what you might call a *passionate boy*——

It was 'Bias's turn to sit erect. He sat erect, breathing hard. "There—there's nothing unusual about the expression, is there?" he stammered. "Though how you come to guess on it——"

"You've been stealin' my letter, somehow!" flamed Cai.

But 'Bias did not seem to hear. He continued to breathe hard, to stare into vacancy. "Did you pay a visit to Peter Benny this mornin'?" he asked at length, very slowly.

"Well, yes—if you must know," Cai answered sullenly, his wrath checked by confusion, much as the onset of a tall wave is smothered as it meets a backwash.

"That's right," 'Bias nodded. "Somehow or 'nother Benny's sold us a dog: and, what's more, he's sold us the same dog. . . . I don't think," went on 'Bias after a pause, "that it showed very good feelin' on your part, your goin' to Benny."

"Why not?" demanded Cai, whose thoughts were beginning to work. "Far as I can see you did the very same thing; so anyway you can't complain."

"Yes, I can. You know very well I never set up to be a scholar, same as you. By rights you're the scratch boat on this handicap, yet you tried to steal allowance. I thought you'd a-been a better sportsman."

"My goin' to Benny," urged Cai sophistically, "was a case of one eddicated man consultin' another, as is frequently done."

"Oh, is it? Well, you done it pretty thoroughly, I must say."

"Whereas *your* goin' was a clean case o' tryin' to pass off goods that weren't your own, or anything like it. . . . Come, I'll put it to you another way. Supposin' your letter had worked the trick, and she'd said 'yes' on the strength of it — I'm puttin' this for argyment's sake, you understand?"

"Go on."

'And supposin' one day, after you was married, she'd come to you and said ''Bias, I want a letter written. I thought o' writin' it myself, but you're such a famous hand at a letter.' A nice hole you'd a-been in!"

"No, I shouldn'. I'd say, 'You rate me too high, my dear. Still,' I'd say, 'if you insist upon it, you just scribble down the main points on a sheet o' paper, and I'll take a walk and think it over.' Then I'd carry it off to Benny." 'Bias, who so far had held the better of the argument by keeping his temper, clinched his triumph with a nod and refilled his pipe.

"Benny's an old man, and might die at any moment," objected Cai.

"Now you're gettin' too far-fetched altogether. . . . Besides, 'twouldn't be any affair o' yours — would it? — after I'm married to her."

"Well, you won't be—now: and no more shall I," said Cai bitterly. "Benny's seen to that!"

"'Tis a mess, sure enough," agreed 'Bias, lighting his pipe and puffing.

"She'll be affronted — oh, cuss the word! Just fancy it, to-morrow morning, when she opens her post! A nice pair of jokers she'll think us!" Cai paced the room. "Couldn't we go up to-night and explain?"

"Five minutes to ten," said 'Bias with a glance at the clock. "Ask her to get out o' bed and come down to hear we've made fools of ourselves? I don't see myself. You can do what you like, o' course."

"I shan't sleep a wink," declared Cai, still pacing. "How on earth Benny—" He halted of a sudden. "You don't suppose Benny himself——"

"Ch't! a man of his age. . . . No, I'll tell you how it happened, as I allow: and, if so, Benny's not altogether to blame. First you goes to him, and wants a letter written. You give him no names, but he learns enough to guess how the wind sits . . . am I right, so far?"

Cai nodded.

"So he writes the letter and off you goes with it. Later on, in *I* drops with pretty much the same request. I remember, now, the old fellow behaved rather funny: asked me something about bein' the 'first person,' and then wanted to know if I didn' wish the letter written for a friend. I wasn't what you might call at my ease with the job, and so—as the time was gettin' on for dinner, too—I let it go at that."

"You did? . . . But so did I!"

"Hey?"

"I let Benny think he was writin' it for a friend o' mine. Far as I remember, he suggested it. . . . Yes, he certainly did," said Cai with an effort of memory.

"It don't matter," said 'Bias after a few seconds' reflection. "He took it for granted that one of us was tellin' lies: and likely enough he's chucklin' now at the thought of our faces when the thing came to be cleared up. Come to consider, there was no vice about the trick, 'specially as he wouldn' take any money from me."

"Nor for me," Cai dropped into his chair and reached for the tobacco-jar. "Well," he sighed, "the man's done for both of us, that's all!"

"Not a bit," said 'Bias sturdily. "We'll walk up early to-morrow, and explain. Ten to one it'll put her in the best o' tempers, havin' such a laugh against us both."

PART II.

"He can't have known!" said Mrs Bosenna early next morning, sitting in a high-backed chair beside the kitchen-table. Her face was slightly flushed, and the toe of her right shoe kept an impatient tap-tap on the flagged floor. "He can't possibly have known."

"We'll hope not," said Dinah. "It's thoughtless, though—put it at the best: and any way it don't speak too well for his past."

"He may have *bought* it, you know," urged Mrs Bosenna; "late in life."

"Well, he's no chicken," allowed Dinah; "since you put it like that."

"I wasn't referring to Captain Hunken, you silly woman. I meant *it*."

"Eh?" said Dinah. "Oh! —*him?*"

"'Him' if you like," Mrs Bosenna mused. "It can't possibly be a female, can it?"

"I should trust not, for the sake of a body's sex . . . to say things like that. Besides, I've surely been told somewhere—in the 'Child's Guide to Knowledge,' it may have been—that the females don't talk at all."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Pretty sure. It was *sŏmething* unnatural anyhow, or I shouldn' have remembered it."

"Well, and if so," said Mrs Bosenna, "one can see what Providence was driving at, which is always a comfort. . . . I was wondering now if you mind going and carrying him out to the garden somewhere. He couldn't take harm in this weather,—under the box-hedge, for instance."

Dinah shook her head. "I couldn', mistress; no really!"

"The chances are," said Mrs Bosenna persuasively, "he wouldn't say anything,—anything like that again, not in a blue moon."

"He said it to me first, and

he said it to me again not ten minutes later. But, o' course, if you're so confident, there's nothing hinders your goin' and takin' him where you like. If you ask my opinion, though, he don't wait for no blue moons. He turns 'em blue as they come."

Mrs Bosenna tapped her foot yet more pettishly. "It's perfectly ridiculous," she declared, "to be kept out of one's own parlour by a bird! Go and call in William Skin, and tell him to take away the nasty thing."

"And him with a family?"

"He's hard of hearin'," said Mrs Bosenna.

"It's a hardness you can't depend on. I've knowed William hear fast enough,—when he wasn't wanted. He'll be wantin' to know, too, why we can't put the bird out for ourselves: his deafness makes him suspicious. . . . And what's more," wound up Dinah, "it won't help us, one way or 'nother, whether he hears or not. We shall go about *thinkin'* he's heard; and I tell ye, mistress, I shan't be able to face that man again without a blush, not in my born life."

"It's perfectly ridiculous, I tell you!" repeated Mrs Bosenna, starting to her feet. "Am I to be forced to breakfast in the kitchen because of a bird?"

"Then, if so be as you're so proud as all that, why not go back to bed again, and I'll bring breakfast up to your room."

"Nonsense. Where d'ye keep the beeswax? And run you up to the little store-cupboard and fetch me down a fingerful of cotton-wool for my ears. I'll do it myself, since you're such a coward."

"'Tisn't that I'm a coward, mistress——"

"You're worse," interrupted her mistress severely. "You never ought to know anything about such words, and it's a revelation to me wherever you managed to pick them up."

Dinah smoothed her apron. "I can't think neither," she confessed, and added demurely, "It could never have been from th' old master, for I'm sure he'd never have used such."

Mrs Bosenna wheeled about, her face aflame. But before she could turn on Dinah to rend her, the sound of a horn floated up from the valley.

Dinah's whole body stiffened at once.

"The post," she said, and ran forth from the kitchen to meet it, without asking leave. Letters at Rilla Farm were rare exceedingly, for Mrs Bosenna made a point of paying ready-money (and exacting the last penny of discount) wherever it was possible; so that bills, even in the shape of invoices, were few. She had no relatives, or none whom she encouraged as correspondents, for, as the saying is, "she had married above her." For the same reason, perhaps, she had long since stopped the flow of sentimental letters from the girl-friends she had once possessed in Holsworthy, Devon. If Mrs Bosenna now and again found herself lonely at Rilla Farm

in her widowhood, it is to be feared the majority of her old acquaintances would have agreed in asserting, with a touch of satisfied spite, that she had herself to blame,—and welcome!

"There's *two!*" announced Dinah, bursting back into the kitchen and waving her capture. "*Two!*—and the Troy postmark on both of 'em!"

"Put them down on the table, please. And kindly take a look at the oven. You needn't let the bread burn, even if I *am* to take breakfast in the kitchen."

"But ain't you in a hurry to open them, mistress?" asked Dinah, pretending to go, still hanging on her heel.

"Maybe I am; maybe I ain't." Mrs Bosenna picked up the two envelopes with a carelessness which was slightly overdone. They were sealed, the pair of them. She broke the seal of the first carefully, drew out the letter, and read—

"HONOURED MADAM,—You will doubtless be surprised——"

She turned to the last page and read the subscription—

"Yours obediently,

"TOBIAS HUNKEN."

"Who's it from, mistress?" asked Dinah, making pretence of a difficulty with the oven door.

"Nobody that concerns you," snapped Mrs Bosenna, and hastily stowed the letter in the bosom of her bodice. She picked up the other. Of that, in turn, she broke the seal—

"HONOURED MADAM,—"

The handwriting was somewhat superior.

"HONOURED MADAM,—You will doubtless be surprised by the purport of this letter: as by the communication I feel myself impelled to make to you——"

Mrs Bosenna, mildly surprised, in truth, turned the epistle over. It was signed—

"Your obedient servant,

"CAIUS HOCKEN."

She drew the first letter from her bodice. After the perusal of its first few sentences her cheeks put on a rosy glow.

But of a sudden she started, turned to the first letter again, and spread it on her lap.

"Well, if I ever!" breathed she, after a pause.

"A proposal! I knew it was!" cried Dinah, swinging about from the oven door.

Mrs Bosenna, if she heard, did not seem to hear. She was holding up both letters in turn, staring from the one to the other incredulously. Her roseate colour came and went.

"Them and their parrots! I'll teach 'em!"

Before Dinah could ask what was the matter, a bell sounded. It was the front door bell, which rang just within the porch.

Dinah smoothed her apron and bustled forth. It had always been her grievance—and her mistress shared it—against the nameless architect of Rilla farmstead, that he had made its long kitchen window face

upon the strawyard, whereas a sensible man would have designed it to command the front door in flank, with its approaches. This mistake of his cost Dinah a circuit by way of the apple-room every time she answered the porch bell: for as little as any porter of old in a border fortress would she have dreamed of admitting a visitor without first making reconnaissance.

A minute later she ran back and thrust her head in at the kitchen-door.

"Mistress," she whispered excitedly, "it's *them!*"

"Oh!" exclaimed Mrs Bosenna, as the bell jangled again. "They seem in a hurry, too." She smiled, and the smile, if the curve of her mouth forbade it to be grim, at any rate expressed decision. She picked up the two letters and slipped them into her pocket. "You can show them in."

"Where, mistress?"

"Here. And, Dinah, nothing about the post, mind! Now, run!"

CHAPTER XVII.—APPARENTLY DIVIDES INTO THREE.

"You'll pardon us, ma'am, for calling so early," began Cai. He was too far embarrassed to be conscious of any surprise at being ushered into the kitchen.

"—You do the apologisin', of course," had been 'Bias's words in the front porch. "Yours was the first letter written: and, besides, you're a speaker."

"You are quite welcome, the both of you," Mrs Bosenna assured him as he came to a halt. Her tone was polite, but a faint note of interrogation sounded in it. "You have had your breakfast?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Ah, you are early indeed! I was just about to sit down to mine."

"We don't want to interrupt, ma'am, but——" Here Cai looked helplessly at 'Bias.

"Go on," growled 'Bias.

"We—we don't want to seem rude——"

"Never mind rude," growled 'Bias again. "Get it over."

"The fact is, there's been a mistake: a painful mistake. At least," said Cai, growing more and more nervous under Mrs Bosenna's gaze of calm inquiry, "it *would* be painful, if it weren't so absurd." He forced a laugh.

"Don't make noises like that," commanded 'Bias. "Get it over."

"It's about those letters, ma'am."

"Letters?" Mrs Bosenna opened her dark eyes wide; and turned them interrogatively upon Dinah. "Letters?"

"Letters?" repeated Dinah, taking her cue.

Relief broke like a sun-burst over Cai's face. "But perhaps you don't read your letters, ma'am, until after breakfast? And, if so, we're in time."

"*What* letters?" asked Mrs Bosenna.

"They've surely been delivered, ma'am? In fact we

met the postman coming from the house."

"Dear me—and did he tell you he had been deliverin' letters here?"

"No—he was on his round, and we took it for granted. Besides, we know they were posted in time."

"William Skin takes the letters sometimes," suggested Dinah, "if he happens to overtake the post on his way back with the cart. It saves the man a climb up the hill."

"I wonder——" mused Mrs Bosenna.

"Where is he?" Cai's bewildered brain darted at the impossible stratagem of intercepting Skin and getting the letters from him.

"Stabling the pony at this moment, I expect. . . . But I don't understand. What letters are you talkin' about? What *sort* of letters?"

"There—there was one from me and one from 'Bias——"

"Goodness!" she broke in, smiling pleasantly, "What, another invitation?"

"Well——" began Cai.

"Yes," struck in 'Bias.

"You might call it an invitation, o' sorts," Cai conceded.

"'*Course* you might," said 'Bias positively.

"You are very mysterious this morning, you two." The widow turned from one to another, her smile still hiding her amusement. "But let me guess. It appears you both wished to send me an invitation, and something has gone amiss with your letters."

"We both sent the same one," explained Cai, and blushed. "That's the long and short of it, ma'am."

"It doesn't seem so very dreadful." Mrs Bosenna's smile was sweetly reassuring. "You *both* wrote, when it was only necessary for one to write?"

"That's what I kept tellin' him, ma'am," put in 'Bias stoutly. "But he would put his oar in."

"Well, well. . . . You both wished to give me pleasure, and each wrote without the other's knowledge——"

"No, we didn't," interrupted 'Bias again.

"Anyway," she harked back with a patient little sigh, "you had both planned your invitation to give me pleasure; and since it was the same——?" She paused on a note of interrogation.

"You might call it the same, ma'am—after a fashion," assented Cai.

She laughed. "Do you know," she said, "I forgot for a moment what friends you are; and it *did* cross my mind that maybe there were two invitations, and they clashed."

"But they do, ma'am!" groaned Cai.

"Eh? Yet you said just now. . . . So there *are* two after all!"

"It's—it's this way, ma'am: the letters are the same, but the invitation as you call it——" Here Cai paused and cast an irritable glance in the direction of Dinah, who had stepped to the door of the oven to conceal her mirth. If the woman would but go he might be able to explain. "But the invitation

don't apply similarly, not in both cases."

"That's queer, isn't it?" commented Mrs Bosenna. "And, supposin' I accept, to which of you must I write?"

"Me," said 'Bias with great promptitude.

"Not at all." Cai turned in wrath on his friend. "I do think you might help, instead of standin' there and——"

"Can't I accept both?" suggested Mrs Bosenna sweetly.

"No, you certainly can't, ma'am.... And since the letters seemin'ly haven't reach you yet, we'd both of us take it as a favour if you'd hand 'em back to us without lookin' inside 'em. We—we want to try again, and send something calkilated to please you better. 'Tis a queer request, I'll grant you——"

"It is," she agreed, cutting him short. "But what's the matter with the letters? Did you put any bad language into them by any chance?"

"Ma'am!" exclaimed Cai.

"Bad language?" protested 'Bias. "Why, to begin with, ma'am, I never use it. The language is too good, in a way, an' that's our trouble; only Cai, here, won't out with it, but keeps beatin' about the bush. You see, we went to Mr Benny for it."

"You went to Mr Benny?" she echoed as he hesitated. "For what, pray?"

"For the letters, ma'am. Unbeknowns to one another we went to Mr Benny—Mr *Peter* Benny—he havin' a gift with his pen——" 'Bias hesitated again, faltered, and came to a stop, aware that Mrs Bosenna's smile had changed to a frown; that she was regarding him with disapproval in her eyes, and that a red spot had declared itself suddenly upon either cheek.

"*You* don't seem to be makin' *very* good weather of it either," Cai taunted him; and with that, glancing at her for confirmation, he too noted her changed expression and was dumb.

"Are you tellin' me,"—she seated herself stiffly, and they stood like culprits before her. "Are you tellin' me this is a game?"

"A—a what, ma'am?"

"A game!" She stamped her foot. "You've been makin' the town's mock o' me with Peter Benny's help — is that what you two funny seamen have walked up here to confess?"

"There was no names given, ma'am," stammered Cai. "I do assure you——"

"No names given!" Mrs Bosenna in a temper was terribly handsome. Her indignation so overawed the pair, as to rob them of all presence of mind for the moment. After all, where lay the harm in asking Mr Benny to word a simple invitation? Since the letters had not reached her, she could suspect no worse; and why, then, all this fuss? So they might have reasoned it out, had not conscience held them cowards — conscience and a creeping cold shade of mutual distrust. "No names given!" repeated the lady. "And I'm to believe that, just as I'm to

believe, sir,"—she addressed herself stiffly to 'Bias—"that you never used bad language in your life!"

"I didn' say that, ma'am—not exactly," urged the bewildered 'Bias. "I dunno what's this about bad language. Who's been usin' bad language? Not me."

"Not since your prize-fightin' days, perhaps, Captain Hunken."

"My prize-fightin' days? My pr— Whoever told you, ma'am, as ever I had any, or behaved so?"

"You had better ask your friend here."

"Hey?"

"Perhaps," said Mrs Bosenna sarcastically, "that goes back beyond your memory! Your parrot, if I may say so, has a better one."

"Missus!" expostulated Dinah modestly, while "Oh, good Lord!" muttered Cai with a start. His friend's eye was on him, too, fixed and suspicious.

"The parrot?" 'Bias, albeit innocent, took alarm. "Why, what has he been doin'?"

"It isn't anything he *did*, sir," protested Dinah, taking courage to face about again from the oven door. "It's what he said."

"I meant to warn you——" began Cai; but 'Bias beat him down thunderously—

"What did he say?" he demanded of Dinah.

"Oh, I couldn't, sir! I really couldn't!"

"I meant to warn you," interposed Cai again. "There's a—a screw loose somewhere in that bird. Didn't I tell you only the night before last that Mrs Bowldler couldn't get along with him?"

"You did," admitted 'Bias, his tone ominously calm. "But you didn' specify: not when I told you I was goin' to bring the bird up here to Rilla."

"No, I didn': for, in the first place, I couldn', not knowin' what language the bird used."

He would have said more, but 'Bias turned roughly from him to demand again of the women—

"Well, what *did* he say? . . . Did he say it in your hearin', ma'am?"

"Ahem!—er—partially so," owned Mrs Bosenna.

"It's no use your askin' what he said," added Dinah; "for no decent woman could tell it. And, what's more, the mistress is takin' her breakfast here in the kitchen because she durstn't go nigh the parlour."

"And I got that bird off a missionary! A decenter-speakin' parrot I've never known, so far as my experience goes—and I've known a good few."

"Folks have different notions on these matters; different standards, so to speak," suggested Mrs Bosenna icily.

"It's my opinion," put in Cai, "that missionary did you in the eye."

"Oh, that's your opinion, is it? Well, you'd best take care, my joker, or you'll get something in the eye yourself."

"We don't want any prize-fightin' here, if you please," commanded Mrs Bosenna.

"There again!" foamed 'Bias, with difficulty checking an oath. "A prize-fighter, am I?

Who put that into your head, ma'am? Who's been scandalisin' me to you?" He turned, half-choking, and shook a minatory finger at Cai.

"I—I didn' say I had any objection to fightin'-men, not when they're quiet," Mrs Bosenna made haste to observe in a pacificatory tone. In fact she was growing nervous, and felt that she had driven her revenge far enough. "My late husband was very fond of the — the ring — in his young days."

It is easier, however, to arouse passions than to allay them. 'Bias continued to shake a finger at Cai, and Cai (be it said in justice) faced the accusation gamely.

"I never scandalised you," he answered. "In fact I done all in my power to remove the impression." Feeling this to be infelicitous—in a sort of despair with his tongue, which had taken a twist and could say nothing aright this morning—he made haste to add in a tone at once easy and awkward, "It's my belief, 'Bias, as your parrot ain't fit to be left alone with females."

"Well, I'm goin' to wring his neck anyway," promised 'Bias; "and, if some folks aren't careful, maybe I won't stop with *his*."

Cai, though with rising temper, kept his nonchalance. "With you and me the creatur' don't feel the temptation, and consikently there's a side of his character hidden from us. But in female company it comes out. You may depend that's the explanation."

"Why, of course it is," chimed in Mrs Bosenna with sudden—suspiciously sudden — conviction. "How clever of Captain Hocken to think of it!"

"Yes, he's clever," growled 'Bias, unappeased. "Oh, he's monstrous clever, ma'am, is Caius Hocken! Such a friend, too! . . . And now, perhaps, he'll explain how it happened—he bein' so clever and such a friend — as he didn' find this out two nights ago and warn me?"

"I did warn ye, 'Bias," Cai's face had gone white under the taunt. "But I'll admit to you I might have pitched it stronger. . . . If you remember, on top of discussin' the parrot we fell to discussin' something—something more important to both of us; and that drove the bird out o' my head. It never crossed my mind again till bedtime, and then I meant to warn ye next day at breakfast."

"You're good at explanations, this mornin'," sneered 'Bias. "Better fit there was no need, and you'd played fair."

"'Played fair'!"—Cai flamed up at last—"I don't take that from you, 'Bias Hunken, nor yet from any one! You fell into your own trap — that's what happened to *you*. . . . 'Played fair'? I suppose you was playin' fair when you sneaked off unbeknowns and early to Rilla that mornin', after we'd agreed——"

"Well?" asked 'Bias, as Cai came to a halt.

"You know well enough what we agreed," was Cai's tame conclusion.

"Where's the bird, ma'am," asked 'Bias dully. Both men felt that all was over between them now, though neither quite understood how it had happened. "It — it seems I've offended you, and I ask your pardon. As for my doin' this o' purpose—well, you must believe it or not. That's as conscience bids ye. . . . But one warnin' I'll give—A bad friend don't us'ally make a good husband."

He motioned to Dinah to lead the way to the parlour, and so, with a jerk of the head, took his leave, not without dignity.

Mrs Bosenna promptly burst into tears.

Cai, left alone with her and with the despair in his heart, slowly (scarce knowing what he did) drew forth a red spotted handkerchief and eyed it. Maybe he had, to begin with, some intention of proffering it. But he stood still, a figure of woe, now glancing at Mrs Bosenna, anon staring fixedly at the handkerchief as if in wonder how it came in his hand. He noted, too, for the first time that the tall clock in the corner had an exceptionally loud tick.

"Go away!" commanded Mrs Bosenna after a minute or so, looking up with tear-stained eyes. It seemed that she had suddenly became aware of his presence.

Cai picked up his hat. "I was waitin' your leave, ma'am."

"Go, please!"

He went. He was indeed anxious to be gone. Very likely at the white gate, below by the stream, 'Bias was standing in wait to knock his head off. Cai did not care. Nothing mattered now—nothing but a desire to follow 'Bias and have another word with him. It might even be. . . . But no: 'Bias was lost to him, lost irrevocably. Yet he craved to follow, catch up with him, plead for one more word.

He went quickly down the path to the gate, but of 'Bias there was no sign.

Poor Cai! He took a step or two down the road, and halted. Since 'Bias was not in sight there would be little chance of overtaking him on this side of the town; and in the street no explanation would be possible.

Cai turned heavily, set his face inland, and started to walk at a great pace. As though walking could exorcise what he carried in his heart!

Meanwhile 'Bias went striding down the valley with equal vigour and even more determination. His right hand gripped the parrot-cage, swinging it as he strode, and at intervals bumping it violently upon the calf of his right leg, much to his discomfort, very much more to that of the bird —which nevertheless, though bewildered by the rapid nauseating motion, and at times flung asprawl, obstinately forbore to reproduce the form of words so offensive in turn to Mrs Bowldler and the ladies at Rilla.

Once or twice, as his hand tired, and the rim of the cage impinged painfully on his upper ankle-bone, 'Bias halted and swore—

"All right, my beauty! You just wait till we get home!"

He had never wrung a bird's neck, and had no notion how to start on so fell a deed. He was, moreover, a humane man. Yet resolutely and without compunction he promised the parrot its fate.

A little beyond the entrance of the town, by the gateway of Mr Rogers's coal store, he came on a group—a trio—he could not well pass without salutation. They were Mr Rogers (in his bath-chair and wicked as ever) and Mr Philp, with Fancy Tabb in attendance as usual.

"Well, I hope you're satisfied this time?" Mr Rogers was saying.

"I suppose I must be," Mr Philp was grumbling in answer. "But all I can say is, coals burn faster than they used."

"It's the way with best Newcastle." Mr Rogers, who had never sold a ton of Newcastle coal in his life (let alone the best), gave this cheerful assurance without winking an eye.

"So you've told me more'n once," retorted Mr Philp. "I never made a study o' trade rowts, as they're called; but more'n once, too, it's been in my mind to ask ye how Newcastle folk come to ship their coal to Troy by way o' Runcorn."

Mr Rogers blinked knowledgeably. "It shortens the distance," he replied, "by a lot. But you was sayin' as coals burned faster. Well, they do, and what's the reason?"

"Ah!" said Mr Philp. "That's what I'd like to know."

"Well, I'll give 'ee the information, and nothin' to pay. Coals burn faster as a man burns slower. You're gettin' on in life; an' next time you draw your knees nigher the grate you can tell yourself *that*, William Philp. . . . Hullo! there's Cap'n Hunken! . . . Mornin', Cap'n. That's a fine bird you're carryin'."

"A parrot, by the looks of it," put in Mr Philp.

"Sherlock 'Omes!" Mr Rogers congratulated him curtly.

"'Mornin', Mr Rogers—mornin', Mr Philp!" 'Bias halted and held out the cage at half-arm's length. "Yes, 'tis a fine bird, I'm told." He eyed the parrot vindictively.

"Talks?"

"Damn! That's just it."

"What can it say?"

"Dunno. Wish I did. Will ye take the bird for a gift, or would ye rather have sixpence to wring its neck?"

"Both," suggested Mr Philp with promptitude.

"What yer wrigglin' for like that, at the back o' my chair, you Tabb's child?" asked Mr Rogers, whose paralysis prevented his turning his head.

"Offer for 'n, master!" whispered Fancy. Mr Rogers, if he heard, made no sign. "D'ye mean it?" he inquired of 'Bias. "I'm rather partial to parrots, as it happens: and it's a fine bird. What's the matter with it?"

"I don't know," 'Bias confessed again. "I wish some-

body'd find out: but they tell me it can't be trusted with ladies."

"Is that why you're takin' it for a walk? . . . Well, I'll risk five bob, if it's goin' cheap."

Mr Philp's face fell. "I'd ha' gone half-a-crown, myself," he murmured resignedly; "but I can't bid up against a rich man like Mr Rogers. . . . You don't know what he says?"

"No more'n Adam — only that it's too shockin' for human ears. If Mr Rogers cares to take the bird for five shillin', he's welcome and good riddance. Only he won't never find out what's wrong with him."

"Honest?" asked Mr Rogers.

"Honest. I've lived alongside this bird seven years; he was bought off a missionary; and *I* don't know."

"Ah, well!" sighed Mr Philp. "Money can't buy everything. But I don't mind bettin' I'd ha' found out."

"Would ye now?" queried Mr Rogers with a wicked chuckle. "I'll put up a match, then. The bird's mine for five shillin': but Philp shall have him for a month, and I'll bet Philp half-a-crown he don't discover what you've missed. Done, is it?"

"Done!" echoed Mr Philp, appealing to 'Bias and reaching out a hand for the cage.

"Done!" echoed 'Bias. "Five shillin' suits me at any time, and I'm glad to be rid o' the brute."

"There's one stippylation," put in Mr Rogers. "Philp must tell me honest what he discovers. . . . You, Tabb's child, you're jogglin' my chair again!"

So 'Bias, the five shillings handed over, went his way; relieved of one burden, but not of the main one.

"Well, if I ever!" echoed Dinah, returning to the kitchen at Rilla. "If that wasn't a masterpiece, and no mistake!"

"Is the bird gone?" asked her mistress. "Then you might fry me a couple of sausages and lay breakfast in the parlour."

Dinah sighed. "'Tis lovely," she said, "to be able to play the fool with men . . . 'tis lovely, and 'tis what women were made for. But 'tis wasteful o' chances all the same. There goes two that'll never come back."

"You leave that to me," said Mrs Bosenna, who had dried her eyes. "Joke or no, you'll admit I paid them out for it. Now don't you fall into sentiments, but attend to prickin' the sausages. You know I hate a burst sausage."

(*To be continued.*)

A SATYRIC DRAMA OF SOPHOCLES.

In the numerous additions which Egyptian papyri have lately been making to the remains of Greek literature, the tragedians, if not especially conspicuous, have by no means been left out in the cold. The first considerable gainer was Euripides, of whose lost "Antiope" substantial pieces were extracted from the cartonnage of a mummy some twenty years ago. More recently large fragments of the same dramatist's "Hypsipyle," of sufficient compass to elucidate much of the structure, were disinterred at Oxyrhynchus in Upper Egypt.[1] Now has come the turn of Sophocles; and the latest discovery, which was also made at Oxyrhynchus, and has just been edited,[2] is without doubt the best. Not only is the find more satisfactory in point of preservation than others in the same category which have preceded, but the work proves to be a Satyric drama, not an ordinary tragedy; and with Sophocles as a writer of Satyr-plays we are wholly unfamiliar. As is well known, the only complete extant specimen of that branch of dramatic composition is the "Cyclops" of Euripides; of the older authors there remain but the titles of some of their plays and short disjointed fragments preserved in the citations of grammarians and others. A fair sample of a Sophoclean Satyric drama therefore reveals what is almost a new side of the poet.

The salient features of Satyric drama were happily summed up by the critic Demetrius in the often-quoted phrase "playful tragedy." Its principal characters were the gods and heroes of the national mythology, which also supplied the tragic stage; but the stories chosen were such as were adapted to a lighter treatment, and a comic setting was provided in the invariable chorus of Satyrs. In Euripides' "Cyclops," where the giant Polyphemus, who is blinded of his eye, may be called a tragi-comic figure, and Silenus and his satellites are buffoons, Odysseus preserves a grave and decorous demeanour. Similarly in the new piece of Sophocles, to which we shall come directly, Apollo and the nymph Cyllene maintain their dignity unimpaired. No doubt, as Horace has remarked in his "Art of Poetry," these sedate figures look a little out of place in such surroundings: "Tragœdia . . . intererit Satyris paullum pudibunda"; it was upon this contrast of diverse elements that such compositions largely depended for their humorous effect. They lay on the border-

[1] Published in Part VI. of the 'Oxyrhynchus Papri,' 1908.
[2] Ibid., Part IX., by the present writer.

land of tragedy and comedy, distinct from, though partaking of the qualities of, both. But they were always written by tragedians, whose practice it was to append a Satyric drama to each trilogy or set of three tragedies. The high tension of the serious plays was thus relaxed by the lighter afterpiece.

Let us now turn to the new example which illustrates this byway of the Attic drama. The papyrus containing it, which dates from about the end of the second century A.D., was found in a much damaged condition, but the broken parts have fitted together satisfactorily, producing large remains of seventeen columns from the beginning of the piece. To judge from the "Cyclops," the length of a Satyric drama was considerably less than that of the average tragedy, and the amount recovered in the present case may well represent one half, at least, of the original whole. The play is the "Ichneutæ," or "The Trackers," of which no more than the title and three insignificant fragments were previously known; one of these fragments certainly recurs in the papyrus, thus establishing beyond question the identity, already sufficiently evident, of the work. No one had succeeded in divining the plot, which turns out to be derived from the familiar myth of the exploits of the infant god Hermes — his theft of Apollo's cattle and his invention of the lyre. The scene is laid on Mt. Cyllene in Arcadia; the characters are Apollo, Silenus and the chorus of Satyrs, the nymph Cyllene, who was the nurse of Hermes, and no doubt Hermes himself, though the text breaks off before he has appeared. In the opening act Apollo announces the loss of the cattle, for which he had vainly sought in various districts of Hellas, and offers a reward for their recovery. Silenus comes forward with his attendant Satyrs, professing his readiness to assist, and Apollo promises them gold and freedom for success. The Satyrs sing a short song, and then, encouraged by Silenus, start out in search; they are the "Trackers," from whom the play was named. Confused traces of the cattle are soon found, their baffling character being due to the wiliness of the thief, who had made the animals walk backwards to a cave where he had hidden them. At this point the seekers are suddenly alarmed by a strange sound, the note of the newly invented lyre, upon which Hermes was playing in the cavern below. Silenus scolds them severely for their cowardice, and promises the encouragement of his presence. They take heart, and sing a lively little ode; but their ardour soon cools as the terrifying sound is repeated with greater clearness, and they are with difficulty prevented from decamping by Silenus, who at last himself beats loudly at the cavern's mouth, and summons the occupant to come forth. Thereupon the nymph Cyllene emerges, and after protesting against the rough behaviour of

her visitors and cautioning them to preserve secrecy, explains that she is the nurse of the child just born to Zeus and Maia, and tells them of his astonishing growth and of the wonderful instrument which he had constructed from the shell of a dead animal and some cowhide; the names of this animal and of the instrument, after a sort of guessing-match, are finally disclosed as "tortoise" and "lyre." But the mention of the cowhide has given the "Trackers" another clue, and they now express their suspicion that the cows from which the hide had been taken were none other than those of Apollo. Cyllene indignantly repels this accusation, and is still stoutly maintaining the innocence of her nursling when the text becomes fragmentary. A broken column indicates that Apollo, summoned by Silenus and the Satyrs, soon reappeared upon the scene, and accepted their evidence as having earned the promised reward. Presumably the sequel resembled that of the Homeric "Hymn to Hermes": the culprit was confronted with Apollo, whose wrath he appeased by the gift of the lyre, receiving in exchange the stolen cows.

For the general purposes of Satyric drama this was a favourable theme. There was a well-marked vein of comedy in the thievish and lying propensities of the infant god, which in the Homeric "Hymn" move Father Zeus to mirth, and were taken by Lucian as the subject of a dialogue; and it was perhaps towards the close when the six-days-old robber was confronted with the indignant Apollo, that the humour of the piece was chiefly developed. In what has actually survived there is nothing so amusing as the scene in the "Cyclops" where Silenus acts as cupbearer to Polyphemus, and surreptitiously to himself. The mimicry by the Satyrs of dogs upon the scent would no doubt lend itself to fun of a boisterous and perhaps broad kind, though there is throughout much less coarseness of expression than in the play of Euripides; it is, however, known from other sources that Sophocles was not always blameless in this respect. Here he writes with restraint, though with a lightheartedness and geniality which must have made this drama, if we had it complete, extremely attractive. Merriment was indeed of the essence of a Satyr-play; in season and out of season, as Cyllene says of them, its grotesque chorus would have their jest.

But this story of the invention of the lyre must have had a special attraction for the poet on personal grounds. Sophocles was himself an adept upon that instrument, and he is stated to have turned his accomplishment to account by playing in his "Thamyras," when that tragedy was brought out. That he performed also in the "Ichneutæ" is not recorded; but it is no hazardous conjecture that here, too, he took an active though unseen part by producing behind the scenes the strains which so much alarmed the

Satyrs. He would therefore be likely to approach this subject with more than usual interest and pleasure; and he seems to have succeeded in investing it with a peculiar charm.

The dualism to which attention has been drawn above in Satyric drama extends to its diction. Here again there was something of a compromise between the manner of tragedy and comedy. Style and vocabulary were largely tragic, but there was a certain admission of words and phrases of common parlance. Doubtless some variation in this regard would be found in the individual plays of a single author. Here, at any rate, it may be said that the Silenus and Satyrs of Sophocles have less licence in language, as in sentiment, than those of Euripides. The same is true of the metre, which shows an unexpected severity. This is not the place for technical details, and it will suffice to remark that the rhythm of the dialogue differs very little from that of a Sophoclean tragedy. The lyrical parts, as in the "Cyclops," are somewhat slight; this reduction in scale, as compared with tragedy, corresponded with the smaller compass of the play as a whole.

To translate Sophocles worthily is never an easy task, and its difficulty is much increased when, as in the present instance, the translation has to be made from an imperfect text. The appended version follows the Greek closely where it is intact; where it is mutilated I have sought to keep up the connection by a certain amount of conjectural supplement. To mark in the printed English text the distinction between translation and restoration would be tiresome, even if it were practicable. The reader who is unable to compare the original will, it is hoped, accept the assurance that where liberties are taken, as for example in some of the choral songs, my imagination has been strictly regulated by the existing remains, which I have aimed at reproducing with as much fidelity as possible.

(*The action passes on* Mt. Cyllene *in* Arcadia. *The stage represents a rugged woodland scene, in a corner of which there is a hidden cave.*)

Apollo. To gods and men I cry, to one and all,
With promises of rich reward, I, Phœbus.
A grievous loss is mine: some thief has stolen
My milch-kine and my calves, my pretty heifers;
All, all are gone, and vainly I pursue
The furtive strayers from the cattle-stall,
By treachery concealed. Ne'er had I thought
That god or mortal creature of a day
Had dared so greatly as to do this deed.
Straightway on learning it, distraught with fear
I go in search, making full proclamation
To gods and men, that all may hear and know,
While frenziedly I follow up the trail.
The tribes of Thrace's host I visited,
But none would own a knowledge of the theft . . .

Thereafter sped I o'er the fruitful plains
Of Thessaly, and to Bœotia's towns,
Then to that fairest land Athene loves . . .
And then I ranged among the Dorian folk
And those who dwell adjacent, whence at last
To steep Cyllene's windy heights I come.
Wherefore, if any shepherd, husbandman,
Or charcoal-burner chance to be at hand,
Or any of the nymph-born Satyr-breed
Which haunts the hills, to all I thus proclaim:
Here ready lies the boon prepared for him
Who finds the filcher of Apollo's kine.

Silenus. O Phœbus, I have heard thy voice upraised
In words of proclamation, and apprised
Of their import with that celerity
An old man still commands, eager to be
Thy favoured benefactor, forth I set,
That haply I may hunt the quarry down.
Then let my victory be noised abroad,
And me be crowned with this thy golden meed.
Yea, I will call my lynx-eyed sons to aid,
If thou wilt but perform thy promises.

Ap. The prize is ready; only make good thy word.

Sil. I'll find the cattle; make thou good the prize.

Ap. The finder gains it, whosoe'er he be.

Sil. We'll seek in company, and share the spoil.

Ap. Succeed, and I will add a further boon.

Sil. What is it? What new guerdon meanest thou?

Ap. Ye shall be free, thou and thy progeny.

Chorus of Satyrs. Hither, hither come away,
Follow where the footprints stray!
Hullo, hullo!
Follow, follow!
Ho there, ho there, thee I call;
Track the thief down, each and all,
Track him to his hidden lair,
Seek him, seek him everywhere!
Hark! our father cheers us on!
How was this sly stealing done
Under cover of the night?
Whither have they turned their flight?
Haply, if we now succeed,
Sons and father shall be freed,
And the kindly god our toils
Shall relax, who to our gaze
Here displays
Earnest of the golden spoils.

Sil. Fortune divine, and thou, the deity
Who guidest steps aright, grant me success
Upon this quest wherein my course is set,
To track the quarry and the plunder down
For Phœbus, of the stolen kine bereft:
The which if any man hath seen or heard,
By telling it my gratitude he'd earn,
And be lord Phœbus' benefactor too.
I offer for the news due recompense.

Chor. Who hath seen, or who hath heard?
Let him speak, and take reward.

Sil. Doth any man profess to be informed?
Then we ourselves, it seems, must set to work.

Come now, let every one seek round about,
Following whatever scent the breezes waft,
Bending his knees and scanning all the ground.
So let the search go forward, that at last
It may be brought to profitable issue.

(*The* CHORUS *now divide into two or more search-parties.*)

Half-Chor. A god, a god, a god, a god! Let be!
We seem to have them; hold! Do not advance!
Half-Chor. These are the footprints of the stolen kine.
Half-Chor. Silence! a god leads forth our colony.
Half-Chor. How now, friend? Is our task performed aright?
How say the trackers opposite?
Half-Chor. Why, yes!
For in these marks alone the proof lies clear.
Half-Chor. See, see, again the very hoofs' imprint!
Half-Chor. Aye, look, the very measurement and span!
Half-Chor. Run quickly on the trail and listen well,
If any ear may catch the noise of kine.

(*A noise.*)

Half-Chor. I cannot hear their voices clearly yet,
But here the foot-marks, here the very track
Of those lost kine lie manifest to view.
Half-Chor. Let be! By Zeus, the footprints are reversed!
They look the other way! See here! What's this?
What is the manner of their ordering?
The front becomes the rear, others again
Are mixed and turned in opposite directions;
A strange confusion held the driver's mind.
Sil. What then is this new art of yours, what's this?
'Tis strange to hunt stretched thus upon the ground.
What is your method? I am all abroad.
Prone as a hedgehog in a copse ye lie,
Or stooping like an ape pollute the air.
What means it? Where on earth were ye taught this?
Tell me, for such ways are without my ken.

(*The noise caused by the lyre of* HERMES *in the cave below is continued: the* CHORUS *retreat in sudden panic.*)

Chor. Hu, hu, hu, hu!
Sil. What means this cry? Whom do ye fear or see?
What is the awful sight? why rave ye thus?
There was some noise here: would ye know its cause?
Why are ye silent, ye who erst were loud?
Chor. Be silent, pray!
Sil. What is it there that ye keep turning from?
Chor. Ah, listen now!
Sil. How can I listen when I hear no voice?
Chor. Do as I ask!
Sil. My search will ne'er be profited by you.
Chor. Listen again awhile to this strange thing,
A noise such as no mortal heard before,
Whereby we here stand dumbstruck and confounded.
Sil. Why do ye cower and shrink before a noise,
Uncleanly bodies fashioned out of wax,
Vilest of creatures, who in every shadow
Behold some terror, ever full of fear,
Slack, heedless, undevoted servitors,
Mere flesh, all talk and lust, professing faith,

But when the time comes, flying from the deed!
Can ye be sons, ye wretches, of that sire
Whose youthful prowess many a trophy set
Before his brides' abodes, whose wont was not
To turn his back in flight, nor be subdued,
Who shrank not at the noise of hill-fed herds,
But was a man of doughty deeds; and now
Their lustre is besmirched by what ye do
At some new cheating noise which shepherds make,
And ye, like children, fear ere ye have proved it,
Abandoning the hope of golden wealth
That Phœbus held before us and confirmed,
The ending of our bondage which he promised
To you and me: these ye let fall, and sleep.
Unless ye now pursue and track me down
These cattle with their cowherd, ye yourselves
Shall raise a noise—the noise that cowards ought.

Chor. Father, stand by and be thyself our guide,
And thou shalt see if any play the coward;
Soon shalt thou know that this reproach is nought.

Sil. Yea, I will keep at hand and urge you on,
Sounding the whistle that speeds on the hounds.
Come, take your stand upon the branching roads,
And I will stay and guide your erring steps.

Chor. Ha, ha! Pst, pst! Hu, hu!
Tell me, what do you do?
Why vainly mutter and cry?
Why look at me thus awry?
What is this first to be won?
I have you! No, he is gone!
You are my prisoner, come!
Hither now! What have ye heard?
Was it a snake or a bird?
A fair wind carries us fast.
You are here! You have passed!
Far with thee will I roam,
Come what come may!
Who is this rider, say!
Here's the track, hither, this way!
Marching, marching, follow me on!
What are you doing? Begone, begone!
Here are the kine, here our task;
Do not delay it, I ask.
How have you helped on the quest?
This is the one who seeks best.
See, he follows right orderly!
Follow, follow, follow with me!
Fie for shame! Thou sluggard, awake!
Soon of our labours an end we'll make;
Freedom is ours, ours for ever,
So falter we never.
On, onward, speed forward, come on!
Already the flank is won.—

(*The noise is heard more plainly.*)

Why silent, father? Did we speak the truth?
Hearest thou not the voice, or art thou deaf?

Sil. Hush! What is that?

Chor. I'm off!

Sil. Stay, if you can!

Chor. It cannot be; but do thou please thyself,
Seek, follow up the trail and find the kine,
Enrich thyself with gold: we are resolved
To spend no further time in waiting here.
Sil. Nay, never will I suffer you to leave
Or to renounce the task, before we learn
What it is hidden in this cave below.
Chor. Thou within, come forth and tell
What is this amazing sound!
So will we reward thee well,
Plenty's gifts shall here abound.
Sil. He'll never show himself to them; but I
With many leaps and kicks upon the ground
Will raise a din which quickly should compel
A hearing, though he were as deaf as stone.

(SILENUS *stamps and beats loudly above the cave;* CYLLENE *appears;* SILENUS *retreats hastily to the rear.*)

Cyll. Satyrs, why came ye rushing noisily
To this green wooded hill, where wild things roam?
What is this new device? What means this change
From those pursuits wherewith ye pleased your lord,
Who, clad in skin of fawns and bearing high
The lightly-wielded thyrsus, ever used
To lead the shout Evoe! around the god,
By daughter-nymphs begirt and thronging sons?
But whither now these gusts of sudden frenzy
Whirl you, I know not. 'Tis a riddle! I heard
At once such cries as huntsmen make who come
Upon some wild brood pent within their lair,
And intermixed sped arrows from the tongue
Against some thief escaping with his spoils,
And proclamations offering rewards.
Then this was drowned by yet another noise,
With kicks of many feet hard by my dwelling.
Hearing such strange discordant sounds as these,
Had I none other senses than mine ears,
I should have said ye all were seized with madness.
How will ye next misuse a harmless nymph?
Chor. Lovely nymph, thine anger stay!
Hate and strife lie far away.
No unfriendly word from me,
No vain taunt, shall ruffle thee.
So revile us not, but this
Graciously disclose, what is
Here concealed below the ground,
Making such an awesome sound?
Cyll. Ah, this is now a gentler mood than erst,
Thus seeking will ye learn more easily
Than by bold feats or rude attempts upon
A timid, helpless nymph. I like it not,
So to engage upon shrill strife of words.
Come, tell it calmly and reveal to me
What is your chief desire in coming here.
Chor. Mighty Cyllene, lady of these hills,
Soon shalt thou learn the purpose of our coming.
But téll us first about this voice's sound,
And who of mortals speaks therewith his thought.
Cyll. Well, first must this be clearly understood,

That, if ye should disclose these words of mine,
The penalty from you will be exacted.
It is a secret in the gods' abodes
Lest tidings of the deed reach Hera's ear.
Zeus came to Maia's hidden dwelling-place,
Forgetful of his own deep-bosomed spouse,
And in a lonely cave begat a son,
Who now within these arms of mine is nursed;
For sickness overcomes his mother's strength.
Wherefore by day and night I watch his cradle,
Giving the tendance which an infant needs,
Supplying food and soothing him to rest.
And lo, he daily grows beyond the span
Of nature, so that fear and wonder seize me.
Not full six days have passed since he was born,
And yet he presses on to boyhood's stature,
His shoot springs ever upward, knowing not
A pause; such is the child stored here within,
Who at his sire's behest lies yet concealed.
And that dread voice ye ask of, ringing out
From instrument unseen, a single day
Beheld him fashion from an upturned box.
So sweet a vessel hath he thus devised
From a dead beast, and makes resound below.

Chor. Stranger story ne'er was heard;
Was it then a child who stirred
Such a fearsome sound as this?
What a wondrous feat is his!
Can you mean a new-born boy
Fashioned this unheard-of toy?
From the dead dry skin and bones
Brought to birth these living tones?

Cyll. Be not faithless! Faithful are the words divine which greet your ear.
Chor. How can I believe a dead thing speaks with voice like this I hear?
Cyll. Nay, believe! In life he spake not, but in death a voice he found.
Chor. Tell us, what was his appearance? Was he long or short or round?
Cyll. Short and rounded like a pot, with dappled skin all shrivelled hard.
Chor. Was he something like a cat in girth, or rather like a pard?
Cyll. Something more or less between, short in the legs and circular.
Chor. Is he not then like a lizard; would he with a crab compare?
Cyll. No, he is not such as these; another likeness please to find.
Chor. Does he then perhaps recall a beetle horned, of Etna's kind?
Cyll. Now at last ye know his semblance, from the truth ye are not wide.
Chor. Say what is the part that sounds, the inner or the outer side.
Cyll. 'Tis the outer covering of skin, near kinsman of a shell.
Chor. What name doth he bear? Supply it, if thou hast aught more to tell.
Cyll. "Tortoise" names the boy the beast, and "lyre" he calls the sounding part.
Chor. How then was the part made vocal, how attuned, by what new art?
Cyll. First the shell he hollowed cleanly, then he stretched thereon a skin
From a cow flayed, which resounding spreads abroad this ringing din. . . .

(*A few lines are lost, in which the description of the lyre was continued; the word "pegs," on which the strings were fastened, is to be recognised.* CYLLENE *proceeds:*)

Here in pain his one assuagement, here his only solace lie;
He delights in this mad joy, and singing songs in harmony.
Highly is his soul exalted by the lyre, his cunning toy;
To a dead beast thus a voice was given by an infant boy.

Chor. Hark! A note the woodland fills,
Fantasies flit o'er the hills,
Clear expressed in song!
But the thing to which we're led
Step by step must now be said:
(How can we be wrong?)
He who found this wonder out
Was the robber, never doubt!
Be not thou displeased at this!
Lady, take it not amiss!
Cyll. What is this folly? Whom do ye call a thief?
Chor. Lady, by heaven, we would not anger thee.
Cyll. Will ye accuse of theft the son of Zeus?
Chor. Aye, and will overtake him, theft and all.
Cyll. The gods are thieves then, if ye speak the truth.
Chor. We speak the truth which thou art fain to hide.
Full sure are we this boy did steal the kine,
And from the corse of one of them he flayed
That piece of skin which to the shell he fitted. . . .
Cyll. I see ye play on my simplicity,
Seeking no other object than a jest.
For my part henceforth be at ease, and if
It gives you pleasure, or if ye think to gain,
Laugh as ye will, and let your hearts be glad.
But do not mock the very son of Zeus,
Nor with new tales assail a new-born child.
His father gave him not a thievish nature,
Nor in his mother's stock doth theft prevail.
If any theft there be, the robber seek
In some poor churl; this boy's house hungers not.
Look at his birth; fasten the guilt where'er
'Tis due; but here to bring it is not meet.
Nay, ye are ever children: bearded men,
Ye revel like a goat among the thistles.
Cease courting pleasure with your hairless pates!
Will not the utterer of foolish jests
Anon to tears be driven? So say I.
Chor. Turn and twist, thy fables weave,
Any artifice conceive;
Thou wilt ne'er persuade
Me of this, that he whose hand
Made this instrument hide-spanned
Other cattle flayed
Than Apollo's: from this track
Do not seek to draw me back. . . .
Cyll. But shall a child like this be called a thief?
Chor. If he does wicked things, then is he wicked.
Cyll. The son of Zeus may not be thus abused.
Chor. If it be true, we have the right to speak.
Cyll. Ye shall not say it . . .
If then the kine are here, where do they feed!
Chor. Perhaps there's room for several below.
Cyll. Who has them then, knaves? What will ye hazard next?
Chor. The boy whom thou dost keep enclosed within.
Cyll. Cease speaking slander of the son of Zeus!
Chor. We'll cease when someone brings those cattle out.
Cyll. Ye and your kine will be the death of me. . . .

(*The text here breaks off. Some remains of another column show* Apollo, *summoned by* Silenus *and the* Chorus, *again upon the stage, eventually, no doubt, to be confronted with* Hermes.)

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MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

MR WINSTON CHURCHILL'S VERSATILITY—"VIOLENCE" AND BAD "CITIZENS"—A CONSTITUTIONAL PEOPLE—ROBERT SOUTHEY—HIS FALSE IMPRESSION OF HIMSELF—AN OVERWEENING CONCEIT—HIS EXCELLENT WORK AND CHARACTER—A HISTORY OF PROSE RHYTHM—PROFESSOR SAINTSBURY'S INGENIOUS THESIS—AN ANTHOLOGY OF PROSE—THE ANCIENTS' LOVE OF NATURE—SIR ARCHIBALD GEIKIE'S TREATISE.

MR WINSTON CHURCHILL has proved himself, since he took office in a Radical Government, the most versatile of demagogues. At the outset he discovered, in friendly rivalry with his colleague, Mr Lloyd George, that there was, for a while at least, a clear profit in inciting the hatred of class against class. The country is not likely to forget or forgive the raving, ramping campaign of these twin sons of Thunder. In the wanton destruction of the British Constitution, by what Mr Balfour called a felon's stroke, Mr Churchill played a conspicuous part. He did his best to create a wanton and unjust prejudice in the popular mind against the House of Lords, to several members of which he is bound by the ties of blood. Such jingling, meaningless phrases as "we've got 'em on the run, we'll keep 'em on the run," are still fresh in the people's memory. Then suddenly class-hatred gathered no more votes. Mr Lloyd George might apparently feed upon his own rhetoric. For himself, Mr Churchill determined "to abjure sack and live cleanly." He came forward, for a month, as a patriotic Minister, the champion of British supremacy and a strong navy. The mood passed swiftly, and Mr Churchill lost the opportunity which is never granted twice to the same politician. He might have resigned, and became the representative of a nation. He preferred to remain in the Cabinet, the slave of a peaceful majority, and to leave the Mediterranean, with the food-supply of the country, to its fate. Still restless to be cast in another *rôle*, he has disturbed the tranquillity of the recess by giving a pompous representation of Mr Pecksniff. There he stands in the pose of platitude, with his hand in his vest, addressing the country for its good. And we offer Sir George Ritchie our sincerest condolences. If he receives at his breakfast-table many such missives as Mr Winston Churchill favours him withal, he will lose his appetite even for his native marmalade.

Through weary columns of 'The Times' Mr Churchill preaches the doctrines of law and order. He has at last

finally renounced the gospel of his father that "Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right." Always a late-learner, he desires to teach the world that obedience to the whim of a composite majority of the House of Commons is the universal duty. Now "opsimathie," said Sir Matthew Hale, "which is too late beginning to learn, was accounted a great vice, and very unseemly amongst moral and natural men," and Mr Churchill must excuse us if we doubt the depth and sincerity of his new doctrine. "Violence within the realm," says he, "is the mark of a bad citizen." This is true enough, if we reserve the right to resist tyranny. It is a lesson which Mr Churchill and his colleagues are prevented from inculcating by six years of unbridled lawlessness. Even if they made public confession of their sins, and, humbly repentant, demanded absolution from their dupes, the absolution would be withheld. They are not repentant. When their own lessons fail them, they misread the lessons of others, and we do not suppose that Mr Churchill has deceived anybody by his latest manifestoes, not even Sir George Ritchie himself.

"Violence within the realm is the mark of a bad citizen." How has our Radical Government interpreted this pregnant saying? For six years it has made a convenience of the law. It has encouraged violence with a stout heart, whenever violence has strengthened its majority. It has looked upon cattle-driving with a lenient smile. An ill-timed jest from Mr Birrell has seemed enough to palliate the fiercest outrage of Nationalist Ireland. There are no "bad citizens" where Mr Devlin reigns. With the contempt for authority which has always characterised them in small things as in great, Mr Asquith and his friends have permitted Mr Fitzgibbon, a gentleman who publicly declared that "estates in Connaught should be sold at fag-end prices," to remain a member of the Congested Districts Board. Was not this "violence within the realm," or is it true that in the government of Ireland only "bad citizens" need apply? The policy pursued in Ireland has been matched by the lawlessness encouraged by our Ministers at the London Docks. Mr Tillett, their prime favourite, has been permitted to pray for the death of Lord Devonport in public. The honest men who dared to work have been belaboured by the strikers at their leisure and with impunity. Not content with placing the Trade Unions above the law, the Government have permitted warlike as well as peaceful picketing. And the reason was not far to seek. The professors of "violence" are well-organised voters, and they are never "bad citizens," who have learned how to go to the polling-booth in a compact body. But what became in the East of London of "all the liberties which dignify our island life,

which are the envy of every foreign people," to quote Mr Churchill's stilted phrases? They were gaily trodden underfoot by the Home Office, lest, surviving, they might lose the Government a handful of precious votes.

For the same reason the miscreants go scatheless who incite soldiers to kill their officers. The murder of officers, we take it, is not the "violence" of "bad citizens." And in general every crime may be pardoned, if the enlargement of the criminal appear "popular" or provide a demagogue with a passage of rhetoric. The world is never likely to forget the blue-eyed shepherd of Dartmoor, the "good citizen," the recital of whose injuries rocked a vast and sobbing audience to tears, and was as fair an excuse for a political argument as any one of our Ministers has ever found. The blue-eyed one, we are forced to confess, was not a true apostle of law and order. But he pointed a moral, he adorned a tale, perhaps he suggested to a foolish Minister that the bench of judges was out of harmony with the British democracy, and, at any rate, he was far too valuable a "citizen" to languish all his life in an uncomfortable jail.

The persistent lawlessness of the Government, then, makes Mr Churchill's rodomontade hypocritical and ridiculous. We agree with a wise "Contemporary," who points out in 'The Times' that the only principle discernible in it all "is that what suits the Government is right, and what does not is wrong." And there is another and deeper reason why Mr Churchill's mouth should be closed in the presence of Ulster and its purposes. "We are a constitutional country," he said in his pious address. Had he said "were," we should have agreed with him. We are "constitutional" no longer. Our constitution was destroyed by Mr Asquith after a campaign of unexampled and irrelevant insult conducted by Mr Asquith's lieutenants. The Radicals cannot have their cake and eat it. Having destroyed the constitution, they cannot find shelter behind it for their misdeeds. We pointed out many months ago in this magazine that the Radicals would be the first to regret the absence of the restraint once imposed upon them by the House of Lords. In desperation Mr Churchill invokes "the Crown and Parliament of these realms." He invokes them too late. The Crown and Parliament are no more. The King, by a trick, has been made the instrument of a party. The veto of the Lords is treasonably abolished, and whatever laws are passed to-day carry with them no other authority than the whim of the House of Commons. Until the constitution be restored, we live under a tyranny, reckless and unbridled. The ancient privileges of the people are torn away. An appeal to the country has been made impossible. Mr Churchill knows as

well as any man in the country that the Home Rule Bill is being passed against the general wish of Great Britain, and it has been passed as the result of a nefarious bargain. Until Mr Asquith has redeemed his debt of "honour," and re-created the House of Lords, we are without the semblance of a government; nothing stands between us and the usurping tyranny. And tyranny leaves but one loophole of escape—resistance. "Men have been found, and will be found again in the world," says Mr Churchill, "to dare and suffer all things in resistance to tyranny." This is one among the many copybook headings, mistaken by Mr Churchill for arguments, which we gladly endorse. And let it be remembered that in this battle of "tyranny" and "resistance" it is Mr Churchill and his masters who are the aggressors. They are thrusting the men of Ulster out of the Union against their will, and handing them over to what they know to be a hostile majority. When Mr Churchill asserts in his most unctuous manner that he and his accomplices "seek to liberate, not to enthrall, to conciliate, not to coerce," he is talking nonsense. "We have no intention," he boasts, "of creating evils greater than those we wish to remedy." Who made him master of his "intention"? If he had studied history he would know that most of the evils which have overtaken the world have come from the failure of "intentions," good or bad. What would be the result of the Home Rule Bill, were it ever passed, Mr Churchill does not know; perhaps he does not care. It is very certain that it would be far other than he or Mr Asquith intends or expects. But in Mr Churchill the sense of humour is wholly lacking. Had he been able to laugh, only once, at his own pomposity, he would never have penned his egregious epistles to Sir George Ritchie.

A lack of humour neutralises the most of the virtues. Many a greater man than Mr Churchill has injured his career by the mere inability to understand his own foibles. Robert Southey, for instance, could never see himself in a fair and just relation to the rest of the world. He was totally without that sense of proportion that is the essence of humour, and he has come down to us in a far different guise from that which would have been his, if he had not too gravely considered his pretensions. He could not, if he would, take himself other than seriously. He compared himself, in prose and verse, —and he loved comparisons, —only with the highest. In his estimation there was only one thing in the world greater than his poetry, and that was his prose. "'Thalaba,'" said he to one confiding correspondent, "has certainly and inevitably the faults of 'Samson Agonistes.' . . . Such as it is, I know no poem which can claim a place between it and

the 'Orlando.' Let it be weighed with 'Oberon'; perhaps, were I to speak out, I should not dread a trial with Ariosto." That is well enough, but there is better to follow. "Nothing can be more absurd," says he at a later date, "than thinking of comparing any of my poems with the 'Paradise Lost.' With Tasso, with Virgil, with Homer, there may be fair grounds of comparison; but my mind is wholly unlike Milton's." Indeed it was, and no less unlike the mind of Spenser, with whom Southey was also ready to compete. "Now I will avow myself confident to ask you," he wrote to a friend, "if you know any other poem of equal originality, except the 'Fairy Queen'?" This question was of 'Thalaba,' and as you read you wonder how it was that a writer thus wanting in self-criticism should have produced the excellent work that Southey produced.

With yet greater hope and courage he looked forward to the fate of his histories. "You will find my style plain and short," he wrote early in life, "and of condensed meaning—plain as a Doric building, and, I believe, of eternal durability." Eternal is a long word, it is the word which Southey applied always to the durability of his works. His 'History of Brazil' filled him with a prophetic enthusiasm which it would not be easy to match in literary annals. After explaining that a certain number of libraries would purchase the book, and some fifty persons, that a few friends would regret that he did not give to poetry the time which he had squandered upon Brazil, "And is this all?" he asks. And finds the answer himself: "No, Chancey Townsend, it is not all; and I should deal insincerely with you if I did not add, that ages hence it will be found among those works which are not destined to perish, and secure for me a remembrance in other countries as well as in my own; that it will be read in the heart of South America, and communicate to the Brazilians, when they shall have become a powerful nation, much of their own history which would otherwise have perished; and be to them what the work of Herodotus is to Europe." There is an ingenuous sentimentality in this passage which might almost move you to tears. So high the hope! So paltry the fulfilment!

And as a lack of humour deprived Southey of a proper understanding of his own powers, so it rendered him strangely unjust to the talents of others. He disapproved of Shelley and Byron with the same gravity wherewith he approved of himself. He disdained to criticise. For him it was enough to condemn in a lofty righteousness of spirit. When he called 'Don Juan' a foul blot on the literature of England, he wrote perhaps with a sense of exasperation. The insolence of Byron, always an artist in invective, was doubt-

less hard to bear. There was small excuse for the language which Southey held to Shelley. "Except the 'Alastor,' which you sent me," thus he wrote to the younger poet, "I have never read or seen any of your publications since you were at Keswick. The specimens which I happen to have seen in reviews and newspapers have confirmed my opinion that your powers for poetry are of a high order, but the manner in which those powers have been employed is such as to prevent me from feeling any desire to see more productions so monstrous in their kind and so pernicious in their tendency." Time has amply redressed the balance. Shelley has won an honoured place in the assembly of the poets. Southey's condemnation remains a curiosity of criticism.

This strange streak of arrogance has profoundly injured the reputation of Southey. If only he who found so much in the world to laugh at could have laughed at himself! But no; he was engaged for forty years in inventing a Southey who did not exist. Like many another, he outgrew the foolish opinions which he cherished in his boyhood, as children outgrow the measles. He refused to make confession of the change. He was still haunted by a phantom of consistency. "It is the world that has changed, not I," said he, and the world has rarely changed so little as between 1794 and 1806. With the same dogged resolution he told himself and his friends that he would not succumb to grief or unhappiness. "My mind is too active and too well disciplined," he declared, "to yield to any such criminal weakness." And when his son died there came a cry from his heart which is worth ten thousand times more than his long pretence of a hardened stoicism.

Thus Southey invented a phantom personage for his own pride and pleasure. A far nobler, gayer figure is the real Southey, who, hidden from himself, is revealed in many pages of his admirable Letters.[1] A valiant man, of incomparable industry and the loftiest sense of duty, Southey lived merely to accomplish his own work, and to serve others. His enthusiasm for literature was tireless and sincere. If he overrated the excellence of his own work, he could not overrate the pleasure which their composition gave him. One day, he writes: "The first proofs of 'Kehama' arrived this evening. Huzza!" Whatever he wrote he wrote with all his heart and with all his skill. When he undertook a life of Nelson, he confesses that he did not choose the subject, and that it was out of his way; nevertheless he "executed it *con amore*," and it remains, in its author's despite, its author's masterpiece of biography. It may be true that his epics will henceforth

[1] Letters of Robert Southey. A Selection Edited by Maurice H. FitzGerald. Henry Frowde: Oxford University Press.

be unread and unreadable. It is equally true that a vast deal of his excellent prose is destined to survive. One book above all, 'The Doctor,' fruit of his leisure and good spirits, is assured of its place in the world. Wise, humorous, and witty by turns, 'The Doctor' is the clearest revelation of Southey's amiable character, and by a becoming irony, he, who so often misread the meaning and import of his own works, very clearly understood 'The Doctor.' "With something of Tristram Shandy in its character," said he, "something of Rabelais, more of Montaigne, and a little of old Burton, the predominant character is still my own." And a very good character, too! He was a man who loved humane letters, and was content with little. He says that he never found life dull, and we can believe him. "I have books, and port wine, and a view from my window." And books meant more to him perhaps than port or the view. He becomes dithyrambic when the making of his library is in progress, and a parcel sent down by coach from his favourite bookseller was a constant excitement. Yet, as he says, had he been condemned to the possession of no more than a score he could have been happy enough. "My library," says he, "if reduced to these bounds, would consist of Shakespeare, Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton; Lord Clarendon; Jackson, Jeremy Taylor, and South; Isaac Walton, Sidney's 'Arcadia,' Fuller's 'Church History,' and Sir Thomas Browne; and what a wealthy and well-stored mind would that man have, what an inexhaustible reservoir, what a Bank of England to draw upon for profitable thoughts and delightful associations, who should have fed upon them!" That is the true note of enthusiasm, and it is heard again and again in Southey's Letters.

He was, moreover, a stout champion of Church and State, at a time when the most of the poets were ranged on the other side—a fact which goes as far to explain his unpopularity as his own arrogance. A good Tory and a noble patriot, he fought the cause of his country with a valiant pen. "I am for war as long as Bonaparte lives," said he, and his hostility to the Corsican never withered nor wavered. To his friends he was as loyal as to his country. Not once does he speak of Wordsworth but in the words of the highest praise. If he deplored the fatal indecision of Coleridge's character, he applauded with a glad heart his wisdom and the grandeur of his mind. If he was bitterly unjust to those who seemed, often on very insufficient grounds, to outrage his delicately poised moral sense, he had a quick understanding of all to whom he gave his sympathy. His sketches of Wordsworth and Coleridge, of Landor and Walter Scott, are as just as they are faithful, and he has drawn that monstrous child of genius, Hartley Coleridge, in the true colours

of pathos and surprise. Indeed, he had a deft hand at portraiture, where his prejudices were not engaged. Here, for instance, chosen at random, is a glimpse of De Quincey. "Little Mr De Quincey is at Grasmere," he writes. "He was here last week, and is coming again. I wish he was not so little, and I wish he would not leave his greatcoat always behind upon the road. But he is a very able man, with a head brimful of information." Is there anything more you wish to know of the opium-eater?

Professor Saintsbury deserves the gratitude of all men of letters for his spirited defence of the art of prose.[1] The critics of the commonplace would have it that the writing of prose is no art at all, but a mere means of conducting an argument or imparting information. Some years ago one of these critics laid it down as a principle that "a man who has an argument to enforce, or a series of facts to relate, ought never in his argument or his relation to lose touch with the spoken speech." Why the unfortunate man should thus be condemned to the strait-jacket of conversation the critic did not explain. He merely echoed the prevailing opinion that prose should not appeal to the ear but to the brain alone, that there was an insidious deception in lofty-sounding periods, that the less a prose writer thought about words the better, that the excellence of Fielding and Goldsmith "was largely accidental." Such was the theory of prose style held by a critic some ten years ago. It was held in defiance of the practice of all the masters, and a mere reference to Sir Thomas Browne or John Donne, to Lamb or Hazlitt, to Coleridge or De Quincey, is sufficient to confute it.

The art of prose depends for its beauty upon the same qualities as we demand from the art of poetry. A choice of words, determined not merely by the argument enforced or the facts related, but by the suavity of the consonants and the music of the vowels which compose these words, a variety of cadence, obtained by a delicate interchange of one syllable and many syllables, a harmony, balanced or unexpected,—these are some of the elements of noble prose. In other words, according to Aristotle, quoted by Professor Saintsbury, prose should "neither possess metre nor be destitute of rhythm"; and it is the purpose of Professor Saintsbury's admirable treatise to analyse the rhythms employed by the great writers of English prose. He agrees with Cicero, that "the management of feet in prose is more difficult than in verse," and assuming, as he has assumed before, that English feet, like Greek, are made up of longs and

[1] A History of English Prose Rhythm. By George Saintsbury. London: Macmillan & Co.

shorts, he has scanned the prose passages, selected with the utmost care, as he would have scanned them had they been verse.

Interesting as is his main thesis, it is not his thesis alone which gives a value to the book. In analysing the harmonies of prose, Professor Saintsbury has not merely set before us a magnificent anthology of prose, but has commented upon it with the wealth of illustration and the energy of phrase which we expect of him. And what a tale he has to tell! What literature can show so fine a procession of prose-writers as passes between Ascham, who marks "the first maturity" of our tongue, and the present day? For richness and variety of rhythm, for splendour of sound, our prose is without rival. The very fact that we have admitted into the language the spoils of French and Latin has increased tenfold its weight and expressiveness. In the possession of unnumbered synonyms we go beyond the scope of other tongues, and seldom have artists been lacking who should use them. The work which Fisher began was carried on by Ascham, by Lyly, and the Tudor translators until in the Authorised Version of the Bible the English language attained one of its highest points. The chapter which Professor Saintsbury devotes to the great version of 1611 is one of the best in the book. He will not hear of "revision"; he thinks that the noblest stuff is worthy of the noblest fashion, he laughs to scorn "the demand for a new Bible every century, to suit the supposed needs of the people." And he concludes his eulogy with a passage of unusual eloquence. "So long as a single copy of the version of 1611 survives," thus he writes, "so long will there be accessible the best words of the best time of English, in the best order, on the best subjects,—so long will the fount be open from which a dozen generations of great English writers, in the most varying times and fashions, of the most diverse temperaments—libertines and virtuous persons, free-thinkers and devout, poets and prosemen, laymen and divines,—have drawn inspiration and pattern; by which three centuries of readers and hearers have kept before them the prowess and the powers of the English tongue." Is that not enough of itself to condemn a hazardous policy of revision?

The Authorised Version made easy the triumph of the ornate style. And how superbly ornate this style was Donne and Jeremy Taylor, Milton and Sir Thomas Browne, are quoted to prove in patches of their richest purple. Raleigh also makes good his claim in at least one splendid passage, which, often cited, still endures citation: "O, eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world has flattered, thou only

hast cast out of the world and despised. Thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet.*" This is not the work of one "who has nothing to do with words," who is intent only to conduct an argument or to relate facts; it is prose nevertheless, prose triumphant and ornate. But, sound as Raleigh's claim may be to flamboyance, we cannot but reject Bacon's. The author of the 'Essays' had a closed and parsimonious style. He shut up in a few words as much sense as he might, and it is the greatest of human follies that this lawyer should have been elected to the unenviable post of the one and only poet and prose writer who flourished in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. To compare Bacon and Shakespeare is like comparing a stately portico with the free-flowing river. The one is severe, immovable, the other is all light and motion. However, no man with an ear for literature was ever a Baconian, and as for the crank, he must not be too closely questioned, even though he asserts that the Authorised Version was the work of the same hand which translated Plutarch and all the classics, and in his hours of ease struck off the masterpieces of Shakespeare and Spenser.

To return to the ornate style: though there is much in Milton's prose that seems distorted and uncomely, he knew also, when he would, to build a passage of lofty English. There can be no doubt of that which follows: "For although a poet, soaring in the high reason of his fancies, with his garland and singing robes about him, might, without apology, speak more of himself than I mean to do; yet for me, sitting here below in the cool element of prose, a mortal thing among many readers of no empyreal conceit, to venture and divulge unusual things of myself, I shall petition to the gentler sort, it may not be envy to me." But it was in Sir Thomas Browne that the splendour culminated. His 'Hydriotaphia' has no purple passages. It is one purple passage from beginning to end. Here is no "cool element of prose." The author is garlanded and hath his singing robes about him. His music is never out of tune, his harmony is never discord. Let us take a passage at hazard—it matters not which, where all is famous and fit for citation; and we shall see the ornate style at the very pinnacle of its ornament: "What Song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among the women, though puzzling questions, are not beyond all conjecture. What time the persons of these ossuaries entered the famous nations of the dead, and slept with princes and counsellors, might admit a wide solution. But who were the proprietaries of these bones, or what bodies

these ashes made up, are a question above antiquarism. Not to be resolved by men nor easily perhaps by spirits, except we consult the provincial guardians or tutelary Observators." Thus wrote our supreme fashioner of words, our mighty inventor of harmonies, not for the furtherance of an argument, nor for the enlightenment of pedantry, but because words sang in his ear, because the sonorous music of prose was ever present to his soul.

Sir Thomas Browne stands upon the apex of the pyramid. When he spake no more the style of English prose descended with ease and rapidity. A reaction in the direction of plainness was inevitable, and fortunately it fell to John Dryden to point out the downward path. Born in a great age, bound by the ties of tradition to the past, Dryden made the descent as gentle as possible. He did not fall headlong into the pit of "correctness" and "good sense." It was reserved for Addison to make the last leap, and when we reach him we have left the heights far behind and out of sight. Nor can a retrospect ascribe the impoverishment of our English style to any others save the authors of 'The Spectator.' Unwittingly, perhaps, they did the language the greatest disservice possible: they reduced it to a standard. They achieved for their own speech what Cicero did for Latin and Voltaire for French. But their work was long since undone by Johnson and Gibbon, by Burke and Hazlitt, by Coleridge and De Quincey, by Peacock and Thackeray, by Macaulay and Carlyle, and many others, to whom Professor Saintsbury does ample and even-handed justice.

We have given our readers no specimens of Professor Saintsbury's scansion. For that we must refer to his book, pointing out that he is in no sense dogmatic, and that if we once admit the rhythmical quality of prose, we may scan the lines as our ear tells us to scan them. As to Professor Saintsbury's opinions, they challenge us again and again to a friendly antagonism. For instance, he is far more than just, we think, to the prose of William Morris. Where there is, as here, conscious imitation, there is and must be, we believe, a loss of sincerity. The art of writing cannot be practised by an arbitrary return to this period or that. The "sedulous ape" cannot demand any higher praise than is due to apery. When Morris consciously and confessedly took Malory for his model, he was guilty of the same artistic sin as the Pre-Raphaelites committed when they chose to ignore all that had happened in the art of painting since the end of the fifteenth century. The pictures of Burne-Jones, once fashionable, are already weary and faded. They belong to no man and to no time. The sincerity, which is the first essential of the arts, is wholly

lacking. We have been told that they are masterpieces, and we know that they are merely exercises. And for us the prose of William Morris lies under the same ban. We recognise that he played a certain tune, and played it excellently well, but it is not his tune, and it seems no more entitled to a place in the great tradition of literature than Sir Richard Jebb's experiments in the metre of Pindar. And as Professor Saintsbury is more than fair to Morris, so we think he is less than fair to Meredith. It is not enough to say that "when a writer is perpetually endeavouring to make his reader see stars by impinging on an abutment of blank wall, rhythm is needless and not to be expected." It is not always Meredith's object "to make his reader see stars." Carlyle and Ruskin cherished that ambition more ardently than he, and it would be very easy to discover many passages in Meredith's novels where the prose is lucid, measured, and harmonious. However, even in disagreement, we admire. And we admire most of all the spirit, which in Professor Saintsbury never flags. He loves books, and reads them with a constant heart, not seven times but seventy times seven. He possesses above all what Hazlitt calls "gusto." His enjoyment of literature increases with the years. He is more youthful in his enthusiasms than he was twenty years ago, and we hope that he will write many more books packed as this one is with matter for thought and controversy.

Few pleasanter books have been published of late than Sir Archibald Geikie's 'The Love of Nature among the Romans' (London: John Murray). As Professor Saintsbury has dispelled a fallacy concerning the use and purpose of prose, so Sir Archibald has dispelled a fallacy concerning the ancients' view of Nature. It has been said again and again that the Greeks and Romans had an imperfect sense of landscape. The ancient poets have been compared with the moderns as interpreters of nature and found wanting. They have been found wanting unjustly. It might even be said that the ancient poets had a more sanely artistic view of natural phenomena than their successors. They did not use the valleys and hills of their native lands as the interpreters of emotion. They did not fill pages with ingenious descriptions of natural scenery as did Mr Ruskin. They had too keen a sense of proportion, too quick an understanding of the boundary-line which divides painting from poetry for that. In the drama of life, as they saw it, landscape was the background, not the protagonist. And for that reason perhaps they proved a wiser love of nature and the open air than do some modern poets who have protested their devotion in the loudest voice.

Sir Archibald Geikie has brought to his task not merely a profound knowledge of science but a lively appreciation of the classics. He has read the works of Virgil, Horace, and Lucretius with the sympathy of one who has pierced the secrets of nature. His taste and perception are never at fault. In every page of his book you may see science coming to the aid of literature. Though Sir Archibald has followed a certain plan, the greatest charm of his book is its discursiveness. It is better to read than to discuss, and there are few who, having read it, will not turn to it as to an old friend whose acquaintance they may pick up at any page they choose. Sir Archibald shows us in turn how the Roman poets looked upon gardens, trees, and woodlands, how they hymned the praise of day and night, how in their verse they pictured the seasons. And for every point that he makes he has an apt quotation, and a ready version of his own.

Of all the poets, it is Virgil who proves most clearly his sense of landscape. Not merely in the Georgics, where he deals perforce with the changing aspects of nature, but in the Æneid too you will find evidence of a keen and faithful observation. He will sketch you a scene in two lines of exquisite truth and beauty. The scenes which he paints are always felt and observed. They are not merely decorative phrases, but a genuine expression in words of natural scenery. But the nature which most intimately appealed to the ancients was a nature trimmed and cultivated by the wit and skill of man. They had no love of wild mountains or of untamed seas. They loved to look at "the innumerable laughter of the ocean" from the security of the shore. To cross the sea was a hardship that they did not care to contemplate. Above all, they shuddered at the inhospitable mountains which enclosed them. There is a passage quoted by Sir Archibald Geikie from Silius Italicus, which presents the view of the Romans so clearly that we will give it here in his spirited version. It depicts the famous crossing of the Alps by Hannibal and his army: "As the soldiers drew near the mountains the recollection of their previous trials was forgotten in face of the far more serious trials that now confronted them. Here everything is wrapped in eternal frost, white with snow, and held in the grip of primeval ice. . . . Deep as the Tartarean abyss of the underworld lies beneath the ground, even so far does the earth here mount into the air, shutting out with its shade the light of heaven. No Spring comes to this region, nor the charms of Summer. Misshapen Winter dwells alone on these dead crests, and guards them as her perpetual abode. Thither from all sides she gathers the sombre mists and the thunder-clouds mingled with hail."

Such is the Roman point of view. Different, indeed, from the view of those who, year after year, imperil their lives in the brave attempt to scale untrodden peaks. It was Hercules, says Silius Italicus, who first climbed these barren citadels. Nowadays Hercules has many and ill-fated rivals, and the poets of romance have taught us to take a very different view of rugged scenery.

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that Sir Archibald's admirable work was the outcome of his presidency of the Classical Association. To that Association the world owes many a debt of gratitude, and no debt deeper than for that happy choice of a president, which gave us a treatise lively without superficiality, and learned without pedantry.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE REPUBLIC IN CHINA.

On October 10, 1911, the Chinese Rebellion broke out in the Yangtsze Valley at Hankow, or, to be strictly accurate, at Woochang, immediately opposite Hankow, on the south side of the river. What the immediate object of the outbreak may have been is not now material. Suffice it that before many days had passed the avowed object was the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty, long aimed at by Dr Sun-Yat-Sen, who will go down to history as the author of this great rebellion.

By the middle of December the downfall of the dynasty had been accomplished. All things considered, the method of its accomplishment was peculiarly peaceful, but this is easily accounted for.

In the first place, through years of corruption, idleness, and debauchery, the Manchus had become an effete race. In the persons of their ruling princes and dignitaries they offered no resistance whatsoever. Such fighting as took place was in the hands of minor military officials. The *rôle* of the Manchu Royal House was cowardice personified, and it fell, as it deserved to fall, not being able to inspire the slightest enthusiasm even among its own northern troops.

A second reason for the easy and rapid downfall of the Manchu Dynasty was the lack of available funds wherewith to purchase military resistance to the rebellious forces. Nor in this respect were the southern and Republican troops much better off. From the early days of the rebellion it was unanimously decided by the Great Powers that financial assistance should be withheld from either of the combatants. This resolve undoubtedly prevented not only the spread of the fighting, but also the possibility of the struggle developing into another Taiping Rebellion, which latter continued for years.

On December 18 a Peace Conference was arranged between the two contending parties, which, after considerable discussion, it was decided should be held at Shanghai. This large and prosperous Foreign Settlement occupies a unique position in the Far East. Neither a Crown Colony, the possession of an European Power as is Hong Kong, nor a concession granted to any one nation as are Kiao-Chao and Wei-hai-wei, Shanghai is nothing more nor less than a miniature republic. Although British influence and trade predominate, the Settlement, as Shanghai is called, is international, and its residents elect their own small Council of nine by whom they are governed. Behind the Municipal Council stands a Consular Body composed of the representatives of seventeen European nations, whose duty it is to look after

the interests of their own nationals as well as to settle such diplomatic questions as may arise and may need referring to the Foreign Ministers at Peking. It will thus be understood that China has no jurisdiction within the limits of the International Settlement, so for this very reason—strange as it may appear to people unacquainted with Chinese ways—Shanghai has become more than ever during the recent revolution the one safe spot for refugees of all classes. Ex-Viceroys, Generals, Governors, have all with wonderful unanimity sought retirement in Shanghai, flocking there from all parts of their own disturbed empire. It was at Shanghai, therefore, that suitable and neutral ground was found whereon to hold the Peace Conference. That an attempt to solve the differences which already divided North and South might be successful was for a time a possibility. Very soon, however, hopes in that direction were doomed to disappointment. To represent the Manchu party, as they were still called, Tang-Shao-Yi was appointed principal delegate. On behalf of the Republicans, as they styled themselves, Woo-Ting-Fang acted as leading representative.

Both these high officials were in their several ways able men, and being old friends, fellow provincials, and Cantonese, if any permanent solution of the difficulties between the opposing factions could have been arrived at, Tang-Shao-Yi and Woo-Ting-Fang might have been expected to carry through such a settlement. That they were unable to do so is simply to say that the course of events in China was altogether too strong for them.

The Peace Congress having proved a failure, it looked for some time as though a renewal of serious fighting must follow. Fortunately, the want of money on either side by means of which troops and war stores could be purchased was increasingly felt. The European nations still maintained their attitude of financial neutrality, so that small loans from foreign firms with representatives on the spot were alone possible to either would-be combatant. Add to the above the fact that the Chinese as a nation are constitutionally much averse to fighting, though not actually the cowards they are sometimes represented to be, and readers of this article have approximately the true story of why the anti-Manchu rebellion of 1911-12 was such a bloodless affair.

Although the result of the Peace Conference was a failure, the negotiations commenced at it were later indirectly resumed. Tang-Shao-Yi, who had already resigned his appointment as Northern representative, was again called upon by Yuan-Shih-Kai to arrange terms for the withdrawal of the Manchu Court, the main object then being "to save the face" of the retiring Regent and Princes.

That every vestige of natural respect had long since fallen from this corrupt and cowardly Royal House

did not seem to occur to its members. The inscrutable decree of Fate had once more handed over all but supreme power to Yuan-Shih-Kai,—the man by whose action in 1898 the late Emperor Kuang-Hsü (the present Regent's brother) had lost his throne.

Yuan, recalled in a peculiarly insulting manner from his even more insulting banishment by the Regent, had consented to return, and soon began to suffer from insulting innuendoes and personal threats, owing to his action in endeavouring to make easy the final disappearance of the hated Manchus.

To say that the Foreign Ministers were relieved at the reappearance of Yuan-Shih-Kai in Peking politics is the bare truth. At last there was some one at the head of affairs who had a grasp of the situation, and with whom intercourse, both diplomatic and personal, could be held by self-respecting Ministers. Yuan-Shih-Kai's policy is not even now fully understood by foreigners; but it is not wide of the mark to say that his aim, while making easy the exit of the despised Manchu Court, was to check, in addition, so far as he could, the inane and dangerous rush into modern republicanism of his southern colleagues.

From the time when the Peace Conference broke up abortively until the beginning of February matters political were in a state of evolution. At last, on the 12th of that month, the Imperial Edict of Abdication was issued, which, in name at all events, made China a Republic. Thus the most momentous event of the twentieth century, perhaps of all the twenty centuries of our era, came to pass.

At the beginning of March the arrangement of a foreign loan to China had for the new Republic become the burning question of the hour. Sun-Yat-Sen had already resigned his nominal position as first President, and Yuan-Shih-Kai, a man and a patriot, whatever his faults may have been, had shouldered the heroic burden under which he is still staggering. With a Cabinet of his own choosing he started on the gigantic task of evolving a government for a continent containing 400,000,000 souls, spread over an area more than three times as large again as Europe, also at the time in a state of complete disorder. Over this huge tract of the earth's surface there had for centuries existed a highly organised government of a kind—perhaps the kind best suited to it. But during the preceding eight months all cohesion had vanished from the various governmental links. Officials who had been competent to work the old machine were either killed, had fled, or been disgraced. Civil authority had practically disappeared, or had been superseded by a so-called Military Government. It was well known to every one that a bankrupt treasury had been handed over to the new President, and, as if the difficulties already enumerated were not of themselves sufficient to daunt

any attempt at creating a new government, the fates decreed that the form of the new government, which had to be evolved from the oldest monarchy in the world, was that of a modern Republic. Could the gods have shown themselves more unkind—even the hideous temple specimens which still in China stand for gods?

Having so far endeavoured to sum up the general situation in China on the date when the new Republic was installed, it is time to describe as briefly as may be the present position and its leaders. In doing so, there is no intention to do more than comment upon affairs in such a manner as to render them intelligible to readers unacquainted with China, but if such comment exposes some of the worst national faults hitherto veiled to European eyes, no one regrets this more than the writer. In this case, however, "veritas prævalebit."

If the meaning of the word *govern* may be accepted in its dictionary sense as "to regulate, control, sway, or restrain," then is China at the present time without any government at all. True, there is at Peking a President, a Premier (resigned within the last few days), a Cabinet, and a National Assembly, but the power of all these combined to impose their will upon the rest of China is practically nil.

In Canton and in the South is open rebellion and defiance of Peking. In the North, Mongolia and Manchuria, the one openly, the other for all practical purposes, have ceased to belong to the Chinese Empire. In Szechuen and the far North-west, though the lives of millions of people continue as before, they are no longer directed from Peking. South of the Yangtsze river the jurisdiction of Yuan-Shih-Kai has about as much weight as had that of President Lincoln over the Southern States of America in the fatal year of 1862. And even north of the Great River, provincial distrust of the new Republican Government is settling down into a well-defined feeling of defiance, though less marked than that exhibited at a greater distance from the capital.

One asset there is which should be allowed for on the side of the new government if we wish to estimate fairly its prospects of success or failure. That is, that by means of two main lines of railway running from the capital province to the Yangtsze river, no doubt the power of the President could make itself felt that far south. But can he find the troops he could trust to send there, or a leader to command them who can keep the field for six months? The provinces, it may be said, are fully satisfied that at present he cannot. And for this reason the feeling grows that North and South can never fuse.

Let us now turn to the *personnel* of the present Cabinet, and endeavour to ascertain what hopes of support the overburdened President may find from among its members. It was in March that the nine Ministers began

to accept portfolios, — though to thus describe the assumption of powers of which they had no experience, and of duties of which they in some cases were deplorably ignorant, is to probably convey quite a wrong impression of the inauguration of the new Cabinet to readers of this article. Of the nine members originally appointed, five have for various reasons already tendered their resignations. It is inadvisable to endeavour to indicate the particular reasons which decided each Minister, but it may be of interest to note that the chief and most important downfall was brought about to a great extent by the trouble over the Six Nations Loan. If to this authenticated reason is added the knowledge that the Cabinet is torn by jealousies, springing mainly from the hidden manœuvrings of the various political societies which the ineradicable tendency towards secret combinations familiar to the Chinese have introduced into their new political life, it is not difficult to prophesy that the disruption of this present Cabinet will occur at no distant date.

In an earlier portion of this article it has already been remarked that the financial condition of China when the new Republican Government arrived was a state of bankruptcy. From the very beginning the burning question before it was to find money. Money to pay the interest on foreign loans; money to pay the vast army of half-trained, useless troops which both sides had rapidly enlisted; money to accelerate the disbandment of 60 per cent of the same; money to pay the salaries of Government officials; money to pay the very Ministers at foreign Courts, not to mention the students sent abroad and financed by the late Government; money, in fact, for every conceivable need of a modern Government which estimates its expenditure at £40,000,000, but whose available income at Peking at the present moment is more accurately represented by as many shillings.

To say that the fate of China depends upon whether she accepts the foreign loan or not is to-day a mere truism. That there must be conditions attached to such a loan to safeguard those who are prepared to finance it is obvious to the meanest intelligence, yet not to a number of would-be Chinese patriots. It is the latter, a small but noisy class, who are endeavouring to raise the cry of "China's Sovereign Rights," and by means of this utterly childish cry to refuse a foreign loan.

It remains to be seen whether they are sufficiently powerful to finally prevent its acceptance by the President. If they are, and noise in China goes a long way, to their account will be credited the break-up of China. Even if they are not, the break-up may still come.

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

AT this moment there is sitting, we believe, a kind of secret council, protected and patronised by the Cabinet, whose object is to inquire "into systems of land tenure, rating, and some problems connected with the housing of the working classes." Mr Francis Acland presides over this council, and Mr C. Roden Buxton is the secretary. The proceedings of this mysterious body are hidden from the common eye. Like much else that is schemed and done by our Ministers, its inquiry is at once "unofficial" and conducted under "the auspices of the Government." The reason of an absurd contradiction is obvious. The hirelings sent to pry into what they are never likely to understand may use the prestige of the Government when it suits them, and may be publicly discountenanced if their indiscretions appear too monstrous. Their object, moreover, is perfectly clear. It is to discover how much of "political" profit lies in the land. Will the poor, ill-treated acres of England yield a cry at another election? Are there still votes to be wrung from the brazen mouth of the gramophone, as it shrieks its imbecility about "the land and the pee-pul"? For us these questions do not seem worth an answer. The green fields of England are not the proper cloth upon which to gamble for the emoluments of office; and if the Government has an honest desire to understand the land, it will instantly discountenance the researches of Mr Francis Acland, carried on at once "unofficially" and "under its auspices," and appoint a public commission publicly authorised to collect evidence.

It does not wish to understand the land. The land, in the eyes of Mr Lloyd George and his friends, is of as much value as a Chinese pigtail. If it prove a popular cry, then agriculture may go hang. The unsettlement of landlord and tenant matters not a bit to the zealot from the town who travels to the country, carpet-bag in hand, to find a seat. The harm which has been done to the tillage of our fields, hampered already by Free Trade, is incalculable. The owners of large estates have long received a lower rate of interest on the money they have invested than any other conductors of industry, and, as though the increased taxation of recent years, the death duties, and the accumulated burdens laid upon their backs by such measures as national insurance were not enough, another campaign of vindictive spoliation is threatened.

The result might have been foreseen. The exodus from the country districts continues. Thousands crowd into the towns who might, in hap-

pier conditions, be profitably employed in the country. Many of our best farmers, hampered by the feeling of insecurity, are betaking themselves to Australia, and thus robbing the motherland of a strength and energy which she can ill spare. What is the Government doing to stem the tide of emigration, to save the countryside of England from being deserted? It is promising heavier taxes upon the land; in a spirit of revenge it is declaring that it will still further hamper a declining industry; and then, at the very moment of its downfall, it is promising a minimum wage and better houses to all who will remain upon the land. Low wages and bad houses are not the causes of the rural exodus: they are the symptoms of decaying agriculture. And the sanguine souls who promise good wages and sound houses do not tell us where the money is to come from which will provide them.

The Socialist believes that the only short cut to reform is that the community should take possession of the land. We can easily picture to ourselves how generously agriculture would thrive when farms, small and great, were managed one and all by smart young bureaucrats from the towns, and were made the joyous material of political favouritism and corruption. But the Socialist is doomed to disappointment. Man in his aspirations remains an individualist. Ownership is very near to the heart of each one of us. What Arthur Young said many years ago remains as true to-day as when it was written, that the sense of independence acquired by the small proprietor will reconcile him to a multitude of hardships. It is, then, we think, by the creation of small proprietors that the happy future of land may best be secured, and we would ask that the warmest support should be given to the policy of the Rural League, eloquently and wisely expounded by Lord Lansdowne at its annual meeting.

At the outset of an excellent speech, Lord Lansdowne freely confessed that the agricultural system of the United Kingdom was passing through a period of transition. The old relationship which existed between landlord and tenant was, in many respects, the best that fate and chance have ever devised. "It is an honourable partnership," said Lord Lansdowne with perfect truth, "and a partnership to my mind full of advantage to both partners. The landlord provides the much larger share of the capital of the enterprise. He bears his full share of the risks and responsibilities; he is content with a very low rate of interest for the capital which he embarks in the concern, and he is also content with a very moderate amount of control over the manner in which the enterprise is conducted. . . . On the other side, the tenant has the use of the landlord's capital, and his own capital has been set free for the cultivation of his farm." Such is the system which has endured

for many years. It has survived the adversity caused by bad seasons and low prices. Many are the tales which tenants might tell, of aid freely given and rent returned. In some districts the ancient system will still flourish. In others it is doomed. Many landlords, however willing they may be, have been too heavily fined and taxed of late years to continue their policy of foresighted benevolence. Worse still, for the purpose of party aggrandisement a strange atmosphere of suspicion has been created. Stealthy politicians have told their ignorant electors that the possession of anything is a crime; that the possession of land is the worst crime of all, a crime which can be adequately punished by death alone. Now, the fiercest enmity may be fought more easily than suspicion. A palpable wrong may be righted. The force of a falsehood, subtly invented and often repeated, gathers strength as it goes, and in the end may work more evil than injustice itself.

Thus it is that the landlord of the old school has lost a vast deal of his power for good, and clearly some means must be devised for doing the work which once he cheerfully took upon himself. What shall these means be? Lord Lansdowne does not believe, and we are in cordial agreement with him, that the English farmer is "attracted by the idea of the impersonal landlordism of a public body." It is not likely that he should be attracted by this obvious inhumanity. A public department at Whitehall is no better to deal with than a County Council. The shackles of a bureaucracy are far heavier to bear than those shackles of feudalism of which we have heard so much lately. Moreover, the cost of public administration is recklessly extravagant. It leaves no margin for aid in bad seasons, and the poor tenant of a County Council must expect a very short shrift if he falls behind in his rent. How, then, shall we encourage the small holder, who, wherever he has flourished, has been a source of strength and security to the State? By making them, says the Rural League, "the complete and undivided owners of the land which they cultivate."

It is a great enterprise, and worth whatever sacrifice we may make for it. The method advocated by Lord Lansdowne is the same method which has succeeded in Ireland even beyond the hopes entertained for it. "Those with whom I have the honour to act," says Lord Lansdowne, "are in favour of State-aided purchase,—not a mere indiscriminate measure of State-aided purchase, but a measure to be liberally resorted to wherever the conditions are favourable and opportunities present themselves; and we desire this upon terms which should not be inconsistent with what we owe to the security of the public interest." The demand made to initiate this experiment is but a single sum of £12,000,000,— the same sum which is paid annually upon

Old Age Pensions. The money would be secured upon the land itself, and when we remember that the present Government has already undertaken to spend £2,500,000 on purchasing land which County Councils shall let out upon hire, the plan does not appear to err on the side of extravagance.

The first and greatest difficulty is to find the right men. We want them neither idle nor unskilled. They should not take up small holdings for the sake of ease nor because they have failed in some other industry. The vocation should be there, and the ambition to succeed. Many years ago Lord Wantage sketched a small holder, who might still be taken as an ideal of his kind. "He is a man who came from the north of England," wrote Lord Wantage, "where he seems to have saved money as an agricultural labourer. He has got seventeen acres, and is able to pay a good rent and redeem his land gradually at the same time. He has built his own house at a cost of £75, a cow-house and a shed besides, and has fenced in his little property, which now bears four acres of good barley and four of oats; there being grass for a dairy and a stock of poultry which will bring him in £1 a-week. He will sell his corn for £50 or £60. . . . Here, we see, is a man who has been sufficiently thrifty and skilful to save money for himself, thereby giving evidence of those qualities which enable a man to succeed in life, wherever he is placed, and would certainly enable any English peasant to make a living on a small farm."[1] If only we could find enough of such men, the problem of English agriculture would be half solved.

That there are risks in using the public credit for the foundation of small holdings cannot be denied. The owners must be prevented from selling or pledging their farms until the purchase is complete. The small holders should be chosen with the best discretion that a properly constituted board can bring to the task. Yet a system of ownership has prospered elsewhere, and if we may profit by the experience of foreign countries, the risks of the project need not be too great. There is, for instance, the example of Ireland, an example which Lord Lansdowne quoted with some hesitation. "I am going to be cautious in talking about the Irish analogy," said he, "because it is not a perfect analogy by any means, but I do think we have a right to refer to the Irish analogy when we want to show the extraordinary contentment, the extraordinary improvement in agriculture, which at once results from the transformation of the tenant to the owner." That is perfectly true, if we remember that in Ireland also the establishment of small owners has not been unattended

[1] This is quoted from Mr Kebbel's excellent book, 'The Agricultural Labourer.'

by danger. Mr G. W. Russell, in his little book, 'Co-operation and Nationality,' a masterpiece of eloquence and political wisdom, has clearly pointed out the threatening disaster. "There is no fear of Socialism in Ireland," says he. "There are other and real dangers. There is the danger that without a complete reorganisation of business methods in rural Ireland, it will slip back gradually into the old order with a new class of landlords. There is the fear that Michael Mulligan, gombeen man, and his class, will begin gradually to absorb the farms of their tied customers and create a new aristocracy. Indeed they are doing this already. The old aristocracy swaggered royally to the devil. They borrowed money at sixty per cent and ruined themselves. The new aristocracy, whose coming I dread, have been accustomed to lend money at sixty per cent and ruin others. I prefer the former type, though I hope no one will accuse me of unduly exalting it. I believe the alternative habit is the more dangerous of the two, and is less easily got rid of as a family tradition."

There is good sense as well as quick wit in this admirable passage, and Mr Russell's dread must be ours also. We, too, must guard against the gombeen man, or his English equivalent. And when we have guarded against him, we are only at the threshold of our difficulties. It is useless to establish small owners upon the land, and to let them sink or swim as they may. First of all, their credit must be assured. As Lord Lansdowne says, "If the new men are to be given a fair start, it will be necessary to provide them with some backing, in addition to the backing of public credit, for the purpose of acquiring the freehold of their farms." And the Rural League, with Lord Lansdowne's approval, advocates the formation of rural banks. Thus may the credit of the farmers be strengthened, and for the rest they may learn many valuable lessons from the experience of Ireland. If the project is to be entirely successful, England must find her Horace Plunkett. What this hero has achieved, in the face of every kind of opposition, we all know. To him, before all others, has the revival of Irish agriculture been due. He taught the farmers the importance of using the best methods, and he taught them the imperative necessity of co-operation. The ancient hazards of production are no more. The middle-man is no longer the supreme King of Ireland. The farmers at last are paid in money, and not in the ounces of tea or pounds of sugar which the gombeen man once thought sufficient for their produce. If we may again quote Mr Russell, we shall see very clearly the end or aim of Sir Horace Plunkett's ambition. "The new movement," says he, "for the organisation of agriculture opens up infinitely interesting and complex vistas. It is not the work which is done which excites

enthusiasm, but the work which is yet to be done—the long vistas and the yet unfolded close. It is not what the State has done or can do which inspires, but the infinitely nobler possibilities which arise through the voluntary co-operation of men to wring from nature and life the utmost they can give." Such, in brief, is the problem to be solved, the hope to be entertained in England, and if we are to make small ownership a success we must follow resolutely in Ireland's footsteps.

The best methods of production, then, and co-operation—these are the first lessons that the small owners have to learn, and a man must be found with knowledge enough and enthusiasm enough to teach them. The prosperity of Denmark has been established entirely by the faithful mastery of these two lessons, and if our small owners are to cultivate the land profitably and to compete with other nations they must be equipped as well as, or even better than, those other nations. And this brings us to a point of equal importance. It is useless to ask the credit of the State for the purchase of small holdings, it is useless to establish a race of farmers upon the soil, if you do not also protect the fruits of their toil. How can our small owners compete successfully with the small owners of Denmark, who are not cursed with the dogma of Free Trade, and who enjoy in addition all the advantages of knowledge, co-operation, and cheap freights? Many years ago we destroyed by our fiscal system the agriculture of England. We have turned our arable land into pasture. We have discarded the plough to make ranches. We have been guilty of the same folly which our ancestors deplored in the sixteenth century. We have found it easier and more advantageous, because it demands less labour, to breed sheep and cattle than to grow corn. Where on the countryside men once lived we now find "a necessary brood of cattle" more profitable; and truly we may echo the words written by Harrison in his 'England' more than three hundred years ago. "If it should come to pass," said he, "that any foreign invasion should be made—which the Lord God forbid for His mercy's sake!—then should these men find that a wall of men is far better than bags of money, and complain of the want when it is too late to seek remedy." So to-day the greed and folly of Free Trade send our farmers across the sea to Australia.

It is idle and useless, then, to promote a policy of small ownership unless at the same time we pass a measure of Tariff Reform. If we are the dumping-ground of all the farm produce of the world, how shall it pay us to grow our own? There is but one method of restoring the fugitives to the country, and that is to make farming profitable. There is but one way to make farming profitable, and that is to protect our markets against the free ingress of farm

produce from protected countries. Nor in this business is it only pounds, shillings, and pence which are involved. There are involved also the happiness and dignity of the country. A slur lies upon the nation that imports its corn and its eggs and its butter from abroad. We shall free ourselves from the slur by no other means than by the wise teaching and encouragement of agriculture and the fair protection of our own markets.

It is to this point of Tariff Reform that the argument always comes back. The Free Trade Government, in promising the country folk better houses and a minimum wage, is indulging illusory hopes. There is no hoard of money which can be asked to provide for these privileges. The cottages of the countryside will be better built when higher wages enable the labourers to pay a fair rent for them. The wages of the labourers will enable them to pay this rent when the fruit of their toil is adequately protected. To suggest that a man should be better paid and live in greater comfort, and at the same time to insist upon a policy of "cheap food," is to take the science of politics very lightly indeed. A minimum wage for agricultural labourers would have an immediate and disastrous effect. A large number, especially of those who are old or weak, would be discharged at once and for ever. More land than before would be turned to grass. Many small farms, which cannot be worked by the farmer and his family, would be given up, and absorbed into larger holdings. The Insurance Act has already laid upon the farmers of England a burden heavier than they can bear, and, as was pointed out the other day in 'The Irish Homestead,' "in a country whose industries are all in competition with foreign countries, adding fifty per cent to wages by Act of Parliament might take fifty per cent off the national power of paying wages at all." That is excellent good sense, as should be apparent to any but a Radical free-trader, who believes that there is a milch cow, called capital, in every village, which may be asked to provide the labourer with whatever sustenance he needs. There is no such milch cow; a profit may be obtained from the land only by the work of the hand and the sweat of the brow. And as the security of a country depends upon those who are *adscripti glebæ*, we would urge, with what force we may, the adoption of a fair system of ownership, and such a measure of Tariff Reform as would make that ownership dignified and profitable.

IN MEMORIAM: ANDREW LANG.

THE melancholy death of Mr Andrew Lang has been the occasion of a multitude of tributes in the press which bear unequivocal testimony to his remarkable position in the world of journalism and letters. That he was at the head of his profession, that he was the deacon of his craft, was tacitly conceded or assumed by all. There were differences of opinion as to the intrinsic value of his work. Among so many voices some must have been raised by persons unfitted, from constitution or training, to do justice to his peculiar merits. But of malicious detraction or premeditated disparagement scarce a sound has reached our ears.

In attempting to commit to paper for remembrance some notes on the salient characteristics of his temperament and genius, it is natural that the first thought should be of his unique versatility. *Nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit*, to quote once more an epitaph which has been in great requisition; and the remainder of the sentence may also be applied to him without any qualification. For the best part of quarter of a century he had been a regular contributor to 'Maga.' During that period he wrote, *inter alia*, of ghosts, of Homer, of 'Edwin Drood,' of Queen Mary, of games, of certain favourite byways of history. These are but a few of the subjects on which he discoursed to the world with a felicity and a charm all his own. He could not "bring it twangingly off" save on themes which interested him. Fortunately the range of his interests was unusually extensive. Yet he would never have been able to display his characteristic ease and mastery but for the habit of unremitting industry. True, he wrote with an enviable facility. His, too, was the precious faculty of utilising odd minutes, of filling up spare moments whenever and wherever they occurred. Ingenuous youth with a turn for writing is apt to picture the successful journalist "dashing off" his epoch-making articles in less than no time for a princely fee. If any one ever seemed to lend countenance by his example to the "dashing off" fallacy it was Mr Lang. But beneath all his brilliance and rapidity and grace was a foundation of sound learning, laid by sheer hard work, as genuine and exacting in its kind as that which is essential to the barrister or the man of business. Since the death of Southey there has been no more conscientious, no better equipped labourer in the vineyard of letters. To the very end he was working "up to the collar"; and, if he sometimes felt the strain and scrupled not to say so, there was never for one moment the slightest relaxation of effort.

It were idle in the meantime

to weigh his multifarious productions in the scales, and by balancing his grave against his gay, his poetry against his criticism, his criticism against his history, to conjecture what portions will be best remembered by future generations. Doubtless his choicer gifts reached their high-water mark in some of his sonnets. Possibly some of his very best stuff lies buried in the files of 'The Saturday Review.' Curiously enough, the most disappointing of his works is the 'Life of Sir George Mackenzie.' We suspect that in the course of composition he discovered a promising subject to be for some reason or other less congenial than he had anticipated. The book bears unmistakable traces of fatigue, if not of disgust: traces from which his *magnum opus* is surprisingly free. The 'History of Scotland' was conceived upon a modest scale. It expanded, however, from a text-book for the use of the upper forms of schools into the four solid volumes which occupied the chief of his waking hours for some of the best years of his life, and upon which he bestowed more pains and trouble than upon any other single work. There the final structure far outran the original design. It was not so with his 'History of English Literature from Beowulf to Swinburne.' He must have been well aware of the magnitude of such an enterprise. To prepare a hand-book of that subject is a task which no man competent to undertake it could contemplate at any time of life without a sinking of the heart. He did not flinch, notwithstanding the burden of well-nigh threescore years and ten, and the book appeared in the very week in which he died—his last testament and confession, as it were, to the educated public.

Everybody is more or less familiar with the style in which such compilations for scholastic purposes are usually executed. We must all have noted how the hackneyed statements and the hackneyed judgments get passed on from hand to hand. We must all have become conscious how the necessary process of compression squeezes out the vital juices which first-hand study and appreciation alone can be trusted to supply. Mr Lang's 'History of English Literature'[1] is one of the few performances of its class instinct with real life. In tone and method it is the very antithesis of Brunetière's well-known manual of French literature. It is a delightful *causerie*, in which, from the first page to the last, we seem to be listening to the author's living utterance. Like others of his works, it discloses a fair proportion of those mysterious slips of the pen which the critical novice delights to castigate, but which, as older hands know too well, successfully pursue the *fallentis semita vitæ* in proof, and leap into the

[1] Longmans: 1912.

blaze of day only when the sheets have issued from the press beyond recall. The presence of such patent *corrigenda*, however, in no wise diminishes the attractiveness of the book. The author's opinions invariably spring from the direct application to the matter in hand of a sensitive, vigilant, and trained intelligence, so that, even when they seem wayward —as in the vilipending of 'Jonathan Wild'—they are neither petulant nor "thrawn." It is refreshing, though not unexpected, to find a really adequate estimate of Miss Austen, in which her matchless genius is neither patronised nor pooh-pooh'd. Equally refreshing is it to come across an account of such Restoration dramatists as Otway and Lee which conveys an intelligible impression of their place in our literature, and imparts a correct understanding of how and what they wrote. Wherever the reader pleases to dip into the volume, he is certain to light upon something at once true and pregnant. For not the least of its excellences is that Mr Lang has "let himself go," and indulged in a thousand of those happy strokes of which he alone possessed the secret; strokes which never decline upon the mechanical artifice of epigram, but which serve to elucidate all that is to be told with unrivalled humour, delicacy, and precision. Thus, of Smollett's heroines he remarks that they are regarded by his heroes "rather as luxuries than as ladies." Of Southey he notes that, "on entering Balliol College, Oxford, he declared himself a rebel, wearing his hair long, as becomes men of genius, while women of genius commonly wear their hair short." Browning, he tells us, won the applause of readers who value "thought" in poetry. "Of these many preferred the passages most difficult of comprehension, and found joy in mysteries where the difficulties were really caused by the manner of the poet." FitzGerald's 'Omar,' "though idolised by the worst judges," remains a very pretty piece of paganism. "'Before his fortieth year,' Mr Gosse informs us, 'there had set in a curious ossification of Swinburne's intellect.' But this appears only to mean that he saw no merit in Ibsen, Stevenson, Dostoieffsky." The truth of the same poet's criticisms, he remarks, "would not be less apparent if the critic did not speak in the tones of a demoniac, and write sentences longer and less easily to be construed than those of Clarendon." On the appearance of 'The Newcomes,' "every one wept with the good Colonel, loathed the Campaigner, . . . sighed with Clive, was more or less in love with Ethel, and was anxious, vainly anxious, to see no more of Laura Pendennis: an angel, perhaps, but a recording angel." Finally, Richard Edgeworth is described as "an energetic and intelligent man, reckoned one of the leading bores of his age." It is in such passages — and the anthology might have been

indefinitely enlarged—that we seem to hear the very voice of our friend yet speaking.

Our last quotation brings to mind a strongly marked *trait* in Mr Lang: his dislike of all ill-founded pretension. He heartily detested bores and pedants, both in print and in the flesh. He detested even more heartily the "movements," the crazes, the societies for the promotion of this crotchet or of that, with which bores and pedants are invariably associated. It was not merely that his keen sense of the ludicrous made him alive to their countless absurdities: their whole mental attitude, their claims to "intellectual" and moral superiority, were utterly abhorrent to his candid and well-balanced mind. Not since the period of the 'Anti-Jacobin' has the noisy race of busybodies, system-mongers, regenerators of society, and wiseacres, had so deadly a critic. In every generation there is apt to spring up a body of men who, adding to natural abilities and an uncommon stock of assurance a certain amount of specialised knowledge, terrorise the rest of the world under the guise of "experts." Thinking that they find something rotten in the state of Denmark, incapable of calm reflection, and eager for notoriety, they hit upon a specific for what is amiss, compared with which all others are spurious imitations. Their field of interest may range from solar mythology to "eugenics," but the threefold badge of the tribe is an overweening belief in their own infallibility, coupled with a proportionate contempt for ordinary human beings; the command of a barbarous jargon; and an irrepressible desire to badger and bully their unfortunate fellow-creatures. For a pardonable reluctance to swallow the nostrum without some proof of its quality the latter are labelled "obscurantists," "reactionaries," and (most horrible of all) "medieval." The regenerators, on the other hand, are leaders of "thought," to differ from whom is to write one's self down a criminal. This singularly offensive class of person was very prominent in the age of Voltaire and the Encyclopædia; was not unknown in the early days of 'The Edinburgh Review'; and was well to the fore in the reign of Queen Victoria. But never has it flourished with so rank a luxuriance as in our own time, when no theory is too fantastic, no project too insane, to escape a Bishop's blessing. A half-educated proletariate, which has been taught to throw the old beliefs overboard, wildly clutches at the last doctor or professor whose name has been "starred" in the newspapers, in its blind groping for the guidance of "authority." It was the intellectual arrogance inseparable from this type of mind which found in Mr Lang a relentless foe. He was strong where the "thinkers" were weak. He had a sense of humour, a working knowledge of the laws of evidence, and a familiarity with the rules of

logic. He was also skilled in the method vulgarly described as "knocking his opponents' heads together." His attacks gave them no little uneasiness, for, their stock-in-trade being chiefly a mass of *a priori* assumptions, they knew not with what weapons they should meet him. But at one point Mr Lang was at a serious disadvantage. He could not help being readable and entertaining. And they had their revenge in being able to point triumphantly to those infallible *indicia* of the hopeless "amateur."

He reserved his most deadly shafts for the founders of new religions and the apostles of new moral codes. New-fangled religions and new-fangled moralities he knew *must* be false, for any apparently novel truth which they contained turned out upon closer examination to be as old as human society itself. As he says of Captain Marryat's novels, he was full of "sound honest views of life and duty." In all business dealings he was the soul of integrity and honour, abhorring the sophistries which make good faith and loyalty melt into thin air. It is consequently not surprising that he had no taste for party politics. A system under which men keep two sets of opinions, one for public, the other for private, use presented no attraction to a nature constituted as his was. But by whatever name he may formerly have chosen to describe himself, his whole instincts were fundamentally and strongly conservative. He asked nothing better than to be allowed *stare super antiquas vias*: "progress," and the vociferous cant of progress, he knew for a delusion and a snare. The civilisation and culture in which he was steeped were those of ancient Europe: a civilisation and a culture which, firmly rooted in the humanities, it is the honourable boast of our older Universities still to maintain, despite assaults from without and treason from within. A true son of Oxford, he must have viewed with serious misgiving the growth of a frame of mind which regards it as the chief business of those who are supported by her noble foundations, to intrigue with wire-pulling politicians and to act as "bonnet" to the most impudent anarchists. Of his fellow-countrymen north of the Tweed he had a thorough understanding. He was well acquainted with their foibles, and knew their vulnerable points. It was amusing to watch the effect he produced upon a certain class of Scot,—the class of Scot who punctually called him "Dr" Lang on the strength of his honorary degrees, and thought he liked it. The "doctoring" class do not much understand raillery, though they sometimes guess that they are being laughed at. They can take their turn at a "flyting," but they are baffled by controversy in which dexterous *badinage* takes the place of solemn repartee. Mr Lang began by mystifying and ended by irritating them. In their perplexity and annoyance they were reduced to the last

resource of the unlettered Scot, the charge of want of "patriotism," and that against a writer who had given abundant demonstration in his 'History' of his willingness to go all the lengths to which a "patriot" can go consistently with fidelity to truth. The plain fact is that a Scotsman of Mr Lang's type exercises an incalculably greater influence for good upon his country than a thousand of the worthy persons who stubbornly fence themselves against the wider civilisation which emanates from the old seats of learning south of the Border. The first thing which the raw Scot requires to learn is that, in so far as the Scottish Universities are efficient to-day, and in so far as there is any education in Scotland based upon the ancient classical tongues—any education, that is to say, worthy of the name—it is almost entirely due to English example and to English inspiration. The conditions requisite to rescue the youthful Caledonian from a "patriotism" more soul-destroying than provincialism itself are precisely those under which Mr Lang's rare promise ripened into a rich and generous maturity. In this respect he presented a striking parallel to his uncle, William Young Sellar.

We think of that correct and fastidious, though never dilettante taste; of that exquisite style, so nervous, so unaffected, so free from display and ostentation; of those stores of learning, accumulated through many industrious years. We call to remembrance, with a sigh, the champion of "lost causes," the defender, in an age of sciolism and unrest, of the essentials of the faith, the ardent inquirer after truth in that medley of passion and prejudice known as history. We dwell on the memory of that striking face with the melancholy eyes, and recall a hundred kindly offices and acts of friendship. And we feel that his removal has left a blank which for us can never be filled. *Ave atque in æternum vale!*

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CONTENTS.

IMPERIALISM IN THE FUTURE. By ARTHUR PAGE, . 431

THE ABU ZAIT CONSPIRACY. By S. LYLE, . . 446

THE WIFE OF BENEDICT ARNOLD. By MRS ANDREW LANG, 469

THE UNFORTUNATE SAINT. By ST JOHN LUCAS, . . 485

MAGDALEN COLLEGE, ... 496

HOCKEN AND HUNKEN. A TALE OF TROY. XVIII.-XXI. By "Q.," 516

OLD ULSTER MEMORIES. By J. M. CALLWELL, . . 541

TALES OF THE MERMAID TAVERN. By ALFRED NOYES, . 557

VII. *Flos Mercatorum.*

THE FRENCH ELECTORAL REFORM. By T. F. FARMAN, . 567

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD, ... 576

AMERICA AND FAIR-PLAY — THE PANAMA CANAL — 'THE BATTLE OF LIFE' — THE LESSONS OF MID-LOTHIAN — THE LATE MASTER OF JESUS COLLEGE — A LAST LINK WITH THE PAST — A DON OF THE OLD SCHOOL — A SPORTSMAN AND A GENTLEMAN.

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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

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IMPERIALISM IN THE FUTURE.

"My policy for the Empire is each for all, and all for each."
—J. Chamberlain.

"I do not much like Imperialism of any kind."
—Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

"How long halt ye between two opinions?"

Those who aspire to be statesmen must not shrink from the responsibilities of leadership. That opportunism is not statesmanship is a saying trite enough, but a demagogue has his own views on the subject. The demagogue sets himself to follow public opinion; he is content to leave to statesmen the more invidious task of forming it, and no doubt he is wise in his generation. Nay, more, if he is prudent enough to bring his active political life to a close before he is found out, his career may sometimes even be termed successful; and in any event such an one probably has little to lose, either in pocket or in reputation. A demagogue is dangerous, not because his shallow outlook will escape detection,—for no one can "fool all the people all the time,"—but because he may do irreparable mischief while his ascendancy lasts. Who can tell where the oratory of a Cleon, a Lloyd George, or a Tillett may lead an excitable and unenlightened proletariate!

The feckless and petty egoism, euphemistically termed "the sovereignty of the personality," which to-day permeates every class of the community, and which always accompanies indifference to Christian ideals, may to a large extent be traced to the appeals which Radical and Socialist demagogues make to selfishness and class hatred. At the same time, would it be true to say that Conservatives are altogether without blame in the matter? Has Conserva-

tive policy in the last few years been wholly uninfluenced by the spirit of opportunism? Why did the House of Lords pass the Trade Disputes Bill of 1906? Why did the Opposition leaders bestow so elaborate a blessing upon the newly introduced Insurance Bill? Why, again, did the majority of Conservative Peers refuse to reject the Parliament Bill? Was it because these measures met with their approval, or because in each case the bolder course was considered to be "bad tactics"? The reason is obvious enough. In like manner, it is frequently urged that the policy of Imperial Preference ought to be dropped, not because those who advise its abandonment do not believe that the principle which underlies it is sound, but because it is thought to be unpopular with the masses. Not by such methods did Mr Gladstone win, almost single-handed, the Mid-Lothian Campaigns of 1880 and 1885! If a sound policy is consistently propagated it will assuredly prevail; but it is equally certain that in politics, as in courtship, the victor's palm never has fallen, and never will fall, to those who show either hesitation or faintness of heart. A great programme invites, and will certainly meet with opposition, but surely upon that ground alone it is not justifiable to abandon it. "Obstacles were made," as Mr Chamberlain once pointed out, "for statesmen to overcome them," but to court expediency is to court disaster. Is there not ground for thinking that some Conservatives are not unwilling to sacrifice in part a policy in which they believe, if only they may thereby be enabled to "dish the Government"? There can be but one end to such a course. Flirting is a fascinating pastime, but it cannot be indulged in without danger, especially when one's heart is already given to another. If Conservatives really believe in their principles they will no longer dally with "strategy" or "tactics." Let their leaders here and now think out an Imperial programme, and let its details be put before the people. The programme of Imperialists has up till now been far too vague and general. It has been urged with irritating persistency that the electors must be content with a bare outline of policy until a change of Government has taken place; and in normal circumstances, no doubt, a wise doctor will refuse to give advice until he is called in, but in critical cases the summons may come too late.

New symptoms have developed with startling rapidity in the organism of the British Empire which call for drastic and immediate treatment, and in the new Imperialism Conservatives possess a sovereign remedy. But it must be applied forthwith and without flinching. Further delay will spell disaster. "You have an opportunity; you will never have it again." It is surely the duty of the Conservative leaders at least to publish their prescription with all possible

despatch, for the future of the Empire is hanging in the balance. The adoption of such a course would provoke criticism, but it would also inspire confidence, and the event would demonstrate that on this, as on many another occasion, "the path of boldness is the path of safety."

What are the facts of the present situation? The first and fundamental fact is that Imperialism has lost the meaning which it formerly bore. The word "Empire" has hitherto been understood to denote "an aggregate of subject territories ruled over by a sovereign State,"[1] but in this sense the British Empire, except in its relations with India and the Protectorates, has ceased to exist. In theory, no doubt, the British Parliament still retains its supreme authority throughout the King's Dominions, but in substance the self-governing Dominions are to-day independent nations, and Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand claim from the mother country a recognition of their power and their responsibilities. "We are a nation," Sir Wilfrid Laurier stated on January 6, 1910. "We feel that we are a nation. We have a population of over 7,000,000. We have practical control of our foreign relations. We have command of our own forces. Our country is the finest in the world. We are under the suzerainty of the King of England. We are his loyal subjects. We bow the knee to him; but the King of England has no more rights over us than are allowed him by our own Canadian Parliament. If this is not a nation, what, then, constitutes a nation? And if there is a nation under the sun which can say more than this, where is it to be found?" The claim of the Dominions to administer their internal affairs without let or hindrance was expressly admitted by Mr Asquith at the Imperial Conference of 1911: "Whether in the United Kingdom or in any one of the great countries which you represent, we each of us are, and we intend to remain, master in our own household. This is here at home, and throughout the Dominions, the life-blood of our polity. It is the *articulus stantis aut cadentis Imperii.*"

"Daughter no more but sister, and doubly daughter so."

The realisation of their nationality has burst upon the Dominions with amazing suddenness. Twelve years ago the Commonwealths of Australia and South Africa did not exist, yet to-day they glow with national enthusiasm, and are eager to take up the burden of national obligations. "But we cannot have absolute autonomy and remain in the Empire," said Mr Foster, M.P., on January 10, 1910.

The whole world, with the sole exception of Great Britain, is conscious of the advent of a political phenomenon at once

[1] A definition given in Murray's dictionary.

perplexing and unprecedented. Are the only alternatives before the Dominions separation or submission? Can no *via media* be discovered? That is the question which the nations of Europe are asking, and that is the problem which the leaders of the Conservative Party are called upon to tackle and to solve!

The second fact is that Great Britain is no longer able to bear alone the burden of Imperial Defence. The seriousness of the naval position of Great Britain cannot be overrated. Over £40,000,000 are expended annually on the Navy, and yet so far from building two keels to one—that principle was long ago abandoned by his Majesty's present advisers — it is now only possible for Great Britain to maintain a 60 per cent margin over Germany in the North Sea by abandoning the control of the Mediterranean. In 1915 Great Britain will have 33 Dreadnoughts in the North Sea and Germany 29, and even this precarious margin—which a single storm might dissipate—is only made possible by the withdrawal of the whole of the Atlantic Squadron from Gibraltar, and, in addition, two out of six vessels that are stationed at Malta. The Atlantic and the Mediterranean are to be protected in the future by the four remaining ships of the Mediterranean Squadron, reinforced within the next two years by four new vessels of the Invincible class. The First Lord of the Admiralty of to-day claims for Great Britain superiority, but not supremacy, at sea — *Quantum mutatus ab illo!* Moreover, the Government do not pretend that they have taken into account the position of Italy and Austria, which at present do not possess any battleships of the highest grade, but which in 1915 will have put upon the water six and four Dreadnoughts respectively. Mr Churchill, discussing the German Estimates in the House of Commons on July 22, 1912, stated that "the law of 1898 was practically doubled by the law of 1900; but if the expenditure contemplated by the law of 1900 had been followed, the German Estimates of to-day would have been £11,000,000. Owing to the amendments of 1906 and 1908, and now of 1912, the expenditure is very nearly £23,000,000." But Navies are neither built nor manned in a day. "Cool, steady, methodical preparation, prolonged over a succession of years," said Mr Churchill, "can alone raise the margin of naval power." It is to be hoped that Mr Borden's warning will not fall upon deaf ears: "The day of peril is too late for preparation." Who can doubt, unless adequate steps are taken forthwith to provide for the future defence of the Empire, that the aspirations of Germany set out in the preamble of the German Naval Act of 1900 will be on the highroad to fulfilment? "In the present state of things there is only one way of protecting Ger-

many's commerce and Colonial possessions. Germany must possess a fleet of such strength that war with her would shake the position of even the mightiest Naval Power." The matter is urgent, and will not brook delay.

The third fact is that the United Kingdom is not able to supply itself with the necessaries of life. She must import an overwhelming proportion of her food-supplies, for which she should pay by the exportation of her manufactures. But where must Great Britain look in the future for a constant supply of food-stuffs and expanding markets for her manufactures? The answer in each case is the same — the Overseas Dominions of the Crown. The annual trade statistics, issued in June 1912 (C.D. 6216), provide remarkable evidence of the trend of British trade.

IMPORTATION OF WHEAT.

1907.	1911.
Foreign Countries. 57,314,200 cwt.	Foreign Countries. 48,891,349 cwt.
British Possessions. 39,853,800 cwt.	British Possessions. 49,176,438 cwt.

EXPORTS OF MANUFACTURES FROM UNITED KINGDOM.

1907.	1911.
Foreign Countries. £218,178,986.	Foreign Countries. £221,838,652.
British Possessions. £123,260,525.	British Possessions. £140,383,975.

Mr Foster, the Canadian Minister of Commerce, said at the Constitutional Club on July 2, 1912: "It is not too much to say that in five years from now the surplus wheat raised in those three prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta will be sufficient to give five or six bushels of flour a-year to every family of five persons in the United Kingdom." And again, at the Fishmongers' Hall on June 12: "What will Canada be fifty years from now? To-day we have 7,000,000 of people. Last year 354,000 people came in as emigrants and settled in Canada; we took 138,000 from Great Britain, 132,000 from the United States, and nearly 80,000 from the rest of the world—making a grand total of 350,000. This year the number will be at least 400,000. If the aspect of Canada, as evidenced between the periods of 1867 and 1912, is different, how much more different will be the aspect of Canada in relation to this Empire when her population has grown from 7,000,000 to 40,000,000 or 50,000,000 of people. This thought impresses itself upon me. Ought we not to be thinking about it: men in the United Kingdom, men in

Canada, and men in the Overseas Dominions?" And what is true of Canada is *cæteris paribus* true also of Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand.

The fourth fact is that the Overseas Dominions are not prepared to share with Great Britain the burden of Imperial Defence unless and until the mother country is willing to grant to each of the Dominions a proportionate share of control over the foreign policy and the Naval Defence of the Empire. Upon this matter the self-governing Dominions have definitely made up their minds. Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa in recent years have contributed a large sum in cash towards the cost of Imperial armaments. It must be clearly understood that in the future further contributions on the same terms will not be forthcoming. "In Australia," said Mr Deakin, at the Colonial Conference of 1907, "for reasons which have already been put on record, the existing contribution has not proved generally popular. Further consideration has convinced the public that the present agreement is not satisfactory either to the Admiralty, the political or professional Lords of the Admiralty, or the Parliament of the Commonwealth." Mr Moore, of Natal, stigmatised such a contribution as "a cold lump sum voted on our estimate for which we have no actual evidence as directly concerning the people we represent." Canada has consistently refused to make any such contribution, because "the acceptance of the proposals would entail an important departure from the principle of Colonial self-government" (Sir Wilfrid Laurier; Colonial Conference, 1902). Can anyone doubt that Mr Foster was expressing the opinion of every Colonial patriot when he stated that cash contributions "bore the aspect of hiring somebody else to do what we ourselves ought to do? The interest that we take in a contribution spent by another is not the interest that I desire for Canada. I think that method ignores the necessities and the aspirations and the prospects of a great people such as the Canadian people are destined to become." It is high time that the people of the mother country understood the facts, and made up their minds as to the future policy of Great Britain in relation to the self-governing Dominions. In Australia and in Canada national aspirations are growing apace, and projects for the construction of a separate Navy have been received in each Dominion with enthusiastic approbation. But the adoption of a scheme for a separate Navy in each Dominion would, beyond a shadow of doubt, tend to bring about disintegration, and not co-operation, within the Empire. "The aim of the Government in connection with Naval Defence," said Mr Pearce, Australian Minister of Defence, in his speech on the second reading of the Naval Defence Bill of 1910, "is that whilst the Navy we are establishing shall be in

some respects separate from the British Navy, it shall at the same time be auxiliary to that Navy." The Defence Conference Memorandum of 1911 lays it down: (1) "That the Naval services and forces of the Dominions of Canada and Australia will be exclusively under the control of their respective Governments," and (16) "In time of war, when the Naval service of a Dominion, or any part thereof, has been put at the disposal of the Imperial Government by the Dominion Authorities, the ships will form an integral part of the British Fleet, and will remain under the control of the Admiralty during the continuance of the war." But there is no obligation upon the Dominions to place a single vessel at the disposal of Great Britain in the event of war taking place. Nay, more, the main ground upon which Sir Wilfrid Laurier advocated a separate Navy for Canada was, that after the adoption of such a policy Canada would not necessarily be drawn into the vortex of European politics. During the Debate upon the Naval Bill (1909-1910) he stated his position in these memorable words: "It is a principle of International Law that when a nation is at war all her possessions are liable to attack. If England is at war she can be attacked in Canada, in Australia, in New Zealand, in Africa, in the West Indies, in India, and, in short, anywhere where the British flag floats. . . . It does not follow, however, that because England is at war we should necessarily take part in that war. If England is at war we are at war, and liable to attack. I do not say that we shall always be attacked. Neither do I say that we would take part in all the wars of England. That is a matter that must be determined by circumstances upon which the Canadian Government will have to pronounce, and will have to decide in its own best judgment." Can any reasonable man believe that such a policy, if persisted in, will further the consolidation of the Empire? South Africa and New Zealand still possess an open mind upon this question, but while in Australia public opinion appears to be hardening in favour of a separate Navy, the accession to power of the Conservatives under Mr Borden has resulted in a reaction of opinion on the Navy question in Canada, and a further—it may well be a final—opportunity is given to Great Britain to enter into a business arrangement on co-operative lines with the Dominions for the defence of the Empire by a single Imperial Navy. But it cannot be too often stated that no such scheme will prove acceptable to Canada which does not provide that the Dominions shall be granted a proportionate share of control over Imperial policy in naval and foreign affairs. "No man in this House, or in this country," said Mr Borden, in the Canadian House of Commons, on March 18, 1912, "need disguise from himself the fact

that if the various Dominions of the Empire do enter into a system of Naval Defence which shall concern and belong to the whole Empire, those Dominions, while that system continues, cannot very well be excluded from having a greater voice in the Councils of the Empire than they have had in past years." Truly this problem involves "large and wide considerations," and it is essential that the people of Great Britain should realise the position in which they are placed. Forty years ago Mr Disraeli, with characteristic perspicacity, foresaw and foretold the course of Imperialism in the future. "The time is at hand, at least it cannot be far distant," he said in 1872, "when England will have to decide between national and cosmopolitan principles." The hour has now arrived when a decision must be reached in the light of the facts as they exist to-day, and after full consideration of all the circumstances. "The issue is not a mean one. It is whether you will be content to be a comfortable England, modelled and moulded upon Continental principles, and meeting in due course an inevitable fate, or whether you will be a great country, an Imperial country, a country where your sons, when they rise, rise to paramount positions, and obtain not merely the esteem of their countrymen, but command the respect of the world."

Is the Empire worth keeping, or is it not? The consistent and emphatic opinion of Radicals has always been that it is not. It is the duty of Imperialists to let the people labour under no misapprehension on this point. "If you look to the history of this country since the advent of Liberalism forty years ago," said Mr Disraeli at the Crystal Palace on June 24, 1872, "you will find that there has been no effort so continuous, so subtle, supported by so much energy, and carried on with so much ability and acumen, as the attempts of Liberalism to effect the disintegration of the Empire of England. I cannot conceive how our distant Colonies can have their affairs administered except by self-government. But self-government, in my opinion, when it was conceded, ought to have been conceded as part of a great policy of Imperial consolidation. It ought to have been accompanied by an Imperial tariff, by securities for the people of England enjoying the unappropriated lands which belonged to the Sovereign as their trustee, and by a military code which should have precisely defined the means and the responsibilities by which the Colonies should be defended, and by which, if necessary, this country should call for aid from the Colonies themselves. It ought, further, to have been accompanied by some representative council in the metropolis which would have brought the Colonies into direct and continuous relations with the Home Government. All this, however, was omitted because those who

advised that policy — and I believe their convictions were sincere — looked upon the Colonies of England, looked upon our connection with India, as a burden to this country, viewing everything in a financial aspect, and totally passing by those moral and political considerations which make nations great, and by the influence of which alone men are distinguished from animals. Well, what has been the result of this attempt during the reign of Liberalism for the disintegration of the Empire? It has entirely failed. But how has it failed? Through the sympathy of the Colonies with the mother country. They have decided that the Empire shall not be destroyed; and in my opinion no Minister in this country will do his duty who neglects any opportunity of reconstructing as far as possible our Colonial Empire, and of responding to those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to this land."

It may be doubted whether a more memorable political utterance, or a more prophetic one, has ever been delivered. The old-time Liberal view was accurately expressed by Mr Cobden in a letter written in 1842: "The Colonial system, with all its dazzling appeals to the passions of the people, can never be got rid of except by the indirect process of Free Trade, which will gradually and imperceptibly loosen the bands which unite our Colonies to us by a mistaken notion of self-interest." Has the intervening period of seventy years wrought any change in the Radical attitude towards the British Empire? Has it in any way modified Radical antagonism to the bands which unite the mother country to the Dominions across the seas? The action of the British Parliament during the recent negotiations with regard to Reciprocity in trade between Canada and the United States demonstrates that present-day Radicals attach no whit more value to the maintenance of the Empire than did their predecessors in 1842. If the Reciprocity Agreement had been ratified, it is now known, from President Taft's letter to Mr Roosevelt, that, in his view, Canada would in time have become an "adjunct of the United States." "I am for it," said Mr Champ Clark, the leader of the Democratic Party in the House of Representatives, on February 14, 1911, "because I hope to see the day when the American flag will float over every square foot of the British North American possessions clear to the North Pole. I have no doubt whatever that the day is not far distant when Great Britain will joyfully see all her North American possessions become part of this Republic. That is the way things are tending now." What is the opinion of Mr Bryce, the British Ambassador at Washington: "As regards Canada herself, her material growth might possibly be quickened by Union, and had the plan of a Commercial League, or Cus-

toms' Union, formerly discussed, been carried out, it might have tended towards a political Union."—('American Commonwealth,' 1910, vol. ii. p. 571.) Lord Haldane expressed the views of his Majesty's Government on the subject in the House of Lords on May 18, 1911, as follows: "The noble Earl seems to think that the British Government throughout these negotiations have been sitting with hands folded, doing nothing. In one sense they have done nothing. They have not interfered, but they have been cognisant at every turn of what has taken place. I doubt whether any negotiations have been more closely watched, or *more sympathetically observed.* . . . The policy of the Government is to give every facility to Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the people of Canada to do the best they can for themselves to enter into this Agreement, and as they think, and we believe, to take thereby the best step they can for the development of Canada." But who was appointed to offer "every facility" on behalf of his Majesty's Government to bring about the Reciprocity Agreement? Mr Bryce, the man in whose opinion a commercial Union would tend to promote political Union between Canada and the United States, and, as a necessary consequence, the disintegration of the British Empire! No wonder that Mr D. A. Thomas, a Liberal M.P., suggested in 1906 that the Liberal Imperial League (which had been formed in 1902 under Lord Rosebery's auspices to "further every substantial attempt to cement the Empire") should be dissolved, on the ground that "the bulk of the prominent members of the organisation are now members of the Government, and presumably, therefore, have abandoned its policy." No wonder that this League, the ewe lamb of Radical Imperialism, should have ended a pitiful struggle for existence on May 31, 1910, unwept for and unsung! It is to the Conservative Party alone that the people of Great and Greater Britain must look for a scheme by which the Imperial problem can be solved. Why is no declaration of policy forthcoming? Has the doctor no remedy to offer, or is the remedy to be withheld until the crisis is over one way or the other? Let the Conservative Party beware lest the summons come too late!

It is well to think the matter out. Naval Defence is the keynote of the situation. If it is true to assert that under the conditions which prevail in Europe the current expenditure upon naval armament is the minimum, and not the maximum, which it is incumbent upon Great Britain to incur, having regard solely to her national interests, and apart altogether from her Imperial obligations, then it follows from what has been already stated that not only the maintenance of the Empire, but the very existence of Great Britain as a European Power, is contingent upon the adoption of a scheme

of copartnership in Naval Defence between Great Britain and the self-governing Dominions. Yet the statement is beyond controversy true. What is the primary purpose for which the British Navy is maintained? Not, certainly, for projects of aggression, nor even to defend the shores of Great Britain from invasion. It is to protect the trade-routes of her food-supplies and the carrying trade of her manufactures. Whether Great Britain possesses an Empire or not, in either case her food-supplies must be secured. Once let her lose her supremacy at sea, and starvation will render invasion unnecessary. And yet it is quite clear that she cannot alone maintain an unchallengeable Navy! If, then, her political and commercial existence is dependent upon the willingness of the Dominions to bear each its share of the burden of Imperial Defence, is it unreasonable or undemocratic that the Dominions should claim an adequate share of control over foreign and Imperial affairs, and is it fair to ask the self-governing Dominions to remain any longer bound by commercial treaties in negotiating which they were not consulted? "If Canada and the other Dominions of the Empire are to take their part as nations of this Empire in the defence of the Empire as a whole," said Mr Borden on November 24, 1910, "shall it be that we, contributing to that defence of the whole Empire, shall have as citizens of this country absolutely no voice whatever in the councils of the Empire touching the issues of peace or war throughout the Empire? I do not think that such would be a tolerable condition. I do not believe the people of Canada would for one moment submit to such a condition. Shall members of this House, representative men, representing 221 constituencies in this country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, —shall no one of them have the same voice with regard to those vast Imperial issues that the humblest taxpayer in the British Isles has at this moment? It does not seem to me that such a condition would make for the integrity of the Empire, for the closer co-operation of the Empire."

The characteristic genius of the British race has hitherto enabled it to adjust its policy to the ever-changing needs of the time. New circumstances have once again arisen, and it is the duty of British statesmen to find a new policy to meet them.

The new Imperialism is the principle of so uniting the different parts of the Empire, having separate Governments, as to secure that for certain purposes, such as foreign affairs, Imperial defence, international commerce, and postal communication, they shall be practically a single State. There is nothing new or unattainable in such a policy. What is novel is the coincidence of facts which for the first time in the history of the world has brought the policy within the reach of practical statesmanship. Adam Smith, who might

almost be called the father of modern Imperialism, wrote: "There is not the least probability that the British Constitution would be hurt by the Union of Great Britain with her Colonies. That Constitution, on the contrary, would be completed by it, and seems to be imperfect without it."—('Wealth of Nations,' Book iv., chap. 7.) And even Cobden, if he were alive, might find it difficult to reconcile some, at least, of his views on Imperial Federation with those entertained by "Little Englanders" to-day. "What is the reason," he said, on April 28, 1853, "that no statesman has ever dreamed of proposing that the Colonies should sit with the mother country in a common legislature? It was not because of the space between them, for nowadays travelling was almost as quick as thought, but because the Colonies, not paying Imperial taxation and not being liable for our debt, could not be allowed with safety to us, or with propriety to themselves, to legislate on matters of taxation in which they were not themselves concerned." *Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis!*

Upon what lines must Imperial Federation in the future proceed? Many practical difficulties will no doubt present themselves, whatever the scheme may be that is suggested. But when once the principle of co-operation on equal terms has been conceded, these difficulties will be found to be neither so serious nor so stubborn as those which were overcome by the Federalists in America, in Germany, or in Austria-Hungary. The fatal policy adopted by Rome and Athens provides a warning to Little Englanders. God grant it may not provide the precedent for British policy in the future! So long as his Majesty's present advisers remain in power the matter must needs remain in abeyance, for your Radical is too narrow in outlook, too introspective in temperament, to be able to view the problem with understanding. Both Mr Asquith and Mr Churchill have recently suggested that by a more systematic use of the Committee of Imperial Defence, to which, as of course, the representatives of the Dominions would be invited, a solution of the problem might be found which would prove acceptable to the self-governing Dominions; but, as Mr Asquith was careful to point out on May 25, 1912, "The functions of the Committee, on the one hand, have no reference to policy. The policy must be determined by the Cabinet. On the other hand, we are not in any sense an executive. Both as regards the Army and the Navy, the executive responsibility lies with the Secretary of State and the First Lord respectively. It is not the business of the Committee of Imperial Defence to lay down principles of policy." No better illustration could be conceived of the failure of Radicalism to appreciate the aspirations of the Dominions! So long as the British Prime Minister lays it down that

"the authority of the Government of the United Kingdom in such grave matters as the conduct of foreign policy, the conclusion of treaties, the declaration and maintenance of peace, or the declaration of war . . . cannot be shared," no progress can be made.

It is the right to co-operate, not the right to advise, which the Dominions claim, and with nothing else will they be satisfied. Again, it is sometimes suggested that the problem could be solved by giving representatives of the Dominions seats in the Upper House of the British Parliament. But this proposal is obviously inconsistent with the admitted and indefeasible right of each Unit in the Empire to administer its own internal affairs in its own way, and upon that ground alone the proposal must be rejected.

The true solution of the problem of Imperial Federation will probably be found in the election of an Imperial Council, similar in its constitution to the United Delegations of Austria and Hungary, to which would eventually be committed the administration of all "common affairs" within the Empire. It may not be easy to predict the future destiny of Austria - Hungary, but it may at least be asserted that the political clouds which hang over the dual Monarchy are due to racial antipathies, and not in any way to the administration of their "common affairs" by the United Delegations, which, admittedly, have done their work extremely well. The system under which the "common affairs" of Austria-Hungary are administered could, without serious difficulty, be adapted to the needs of the British Empire. Members of the Imperial Council might be appointed by the legislatures of each Unit within the Empire from among its own elected members, and members of the Imperial Council would be liable to be dismissed from office at the pleasure of the legislature which appointed them. The number of the representatives of each Unit would bear the same proportion to the total number of members as the population of the Unit might bear to the whole population of the Empire; or the representation of each Unit might be in the same ratio to the total representation of the Empire as the produce of its Imperial taxes might bear to the total Imperial revenue. The members of the Imperial Council would work through an executive appointed either by the Crown or by the Imperial Council itself from amongst its members, and the Acts of the executive would require for their validity the ratification of the Imperial Council. There is no doubt in an Imperial Council constituted in this form that the representatives of the United Kingdom (which would constitute one Unit) would largely predominate, but of that the Dominions could not reasonably complain, for their representation on the Imperial Council would increase in direct ratio with their future develop-

ment. To the Imperial Council constituted in this manner would be intrusted the administration of foreign affairs and matters of Imperial defence, both of which subjects by general consent of all parties ought to be lifted above party politics. Each Unit would be free to raise its own quota of Imperial taxation in its own way. If it be asked whether the Imperial Council would be granted coercive power to impose its decrees upon recalcitrant members of the Imperial Federation, the answer will be that as such a scheme as is here outlined could only be inaugurated with the consent of all the Units of the Confederation, each Unit would be free to abandon its position within the Empire, but that, while it would probably be inadvisable, at all events at the outset, to invest the Imperial Council with coercive powers, it would in practice be found impossible for any Dominion to refuse to raise its contribution towards the cost of an Imperial or a defensive programme which its own representatives had had a real voice in framing. The same difficulty presented itself to the promoters of the American and German Federations, and was in each case satisfactorily overcome. Moreover, the alternative open to a seceding Dominion would be far from exhilarating, and must be borne in mind, namely, separation without the possession of adequate means whereby either its trade or its territory could be protected! Such, in bare outline, must be the framework of the Imperial Federation in the future. But it would be idle to suggest that Imperialists are prepared to limit the policy of Imperial Federation to foreign affairs and Naval Defence. They realise with Mr Bonar Law that "there could never be co-operation in war unless there first had been co-operation in peace," and they look forward to the time when commercial intercourse within the Empire shall be wholly free and untrammelled by tariff restrictions, and when the Imperial Council will be intrusted with the regulation of external trade relations as one of the "common affairs" of the Empire. That is the scheme of Imperial Federation which was first propounded by Adam Smith. At the same time, while Imperialists recognise that the hour is not yet ripe for the full realisation of their Imperial policy, they hold that unless the policy of Imperial Preference is forthwith adopted as the first step towards free trade within the Empire, the whole fabric of the Empire will be put in jeopardy. That Imperial Preference would incalculably strengthen the manufacturing trade of Great Britain, and improve the condition of labour in this country, is abundantly proved by trade statistics, and the value to this country of Colonial Preferential Tariffs is admitted even by such staunch free traders as Lord Cromer and Mr Asquith. That Imperial Preference would tend to lower the price of foodstuffs in this country is equally

certain, for the wheat production of the world would thereby be stimulated and increased, unless, indeed, the laws which govern supply and demand no longer obtain!

This, then, is the meaning of the new Imperialism, and upon these lines must the future programme of the Conservative Party be framed. To every man who loves his country, ay, and to every man who loves his pocket, such a policy most surely makes its appeal. It is seen that not only the maintenance of the Empire, but the very existence of Great Britain as a sovereign Power, is contingent upon the realisation of this scheme of Imperial Federation. But "time is of the essence" in this matter of Imperial Preference. "Is it not a mistake," as Mr Chamberlain once pointed out, "to keep your umbrella shut up until you are wet through?" It is fifteen years now since Canada first granted preferential duties to Great Britain, and to-day the war-clouds lower darkly on the horizon. Yet nothing has been done! How long is Great Britain to remain glum and unresponsive? "The issue," said Mr Borden on July 16, at the House of Commons, "is fraught with grave significance for us, but with even deeper meaning for you. The next ten or twenty years will be critical in the history of the Empire; they may be even decisive of its future. God grant that whether we be of these Mother Islands or of the great Dominions beyond the Seas, we may so bear ourselves that the future shall not hold to our lips the chalice of vain regret for opportunity neglected and dead." Is it not time, then, that the Conservative Leaders formulated their Imperial Programme? We are told to "think Imperially," but it is important first of all to understand what Imperialism means. The old Imperialism spells chaos and disintegration, the new Imperialism consolidation and Peace!

> "Wider still and wider shall thy bounds be set;
> God, who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet."

The policy of Imperialists will pass unscathed through the ordeal of financial criticism. Imperial Preference is a business question, but it is also something more, for under Imperial Federation alone can the British race work out its glorious destiny. "Civis Romanus sum" was a password which no one in ancient times could afford to disregard; why should not "Civis Britannicus sum" be its counterpart to-day?

To the true patriot Imperialism connotes not merely British commercial prosperity, but a World-wide Peace secured by the unassailable supremacy of the British Empire. The consummation of this policy would be the "crowning mercy" of Conservative statesmanship. The alternative is drift and national decay. The British race stands at the parting of the ways.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?"

ARTHUR PAGE.

"WELL," thought Burke, as he rummaged in his despatch-box for the Intelligence Department Cipher, "it's the first time I've had to use this since I've been here." He found the sealed envelope and threw it on to his camp-bed,—a piece of furniture that lent itself to the uses of a table, a sofa, and a depository for folded garments during waking hours,—turning again to look up the box. He recalled the day, now more than a year ago, when he had taken over the cipher from Grantham, his predecessor as Inspector at Abu Zait. The recollection came back vividly as he looked at the sealed envelope lying on the bed. He could almost hear Grantham's caution, "You'd better open the envelope and see that it's all correct. I've never looked at it since I took it over myself."

Burke remembered how he had taken out the type-written code, examined it with a vague feeling that there was something interesting and romantic about a cipher, and then, taking a new envelope from the rack, had put in the document and made it secure by a generous application of red sealing-wax. "Better make it quite safe!" he had said to Grantham, and with a half-serious, half-absurd precaution, had prodded the soft wax with the edge of a little key that formed one of a bunch on his chain.

With these things in his mind he picked up the envelope, and there, sure enough, were the two little depressions made by the teeth of his key. His left hand went mechanically to his pocket, out came the bunch, and — yes, the teeth corresponded to the two marks! He laid the key's edge carelessly on to the wax, playing with it as a man not in a hurry to begin the tiresome deciphering of a code wire. It was hot, and he was in the mood to think nothing of much importance. "Those chaps in the Intelligence can't be easy without their little mysteries," he grumbled, looking lazily at the key as it fitted down on to the wax.

Suddenly his face became alert and the grumbling undertone of his thoughts gave place to a rigid attention. *Did* the key fit?

He held the envelope to the light and carefully examined the parallel marks on the seal. Surely one was deeper than the other, and a little wider! He looked closely at the edge of the key, again brought it into contact with the wax, and then stood erect, the envelope in his hand.

Out there, beyond the door of the hut, the sun beat down from a cloudless sky upon the silver bosom of the river, and away across the flat bush-covered desert at the far side the flicker of warm air rising made a tremulous undulation, as if the horizon danced at its skyward edge.

Burke was dimly conscious of these things as his mind pounded out the reluctant certainty that the seal had been tampered with.

A certainty it was to him, and reluctantly he admitted it, for to admit it was to convict some person or persons in his little community of treachery to the Government. "Who could have done it?" he asked himself as he ripped the edge of the envelope with his penknife and took out the code. He reached for the telegram and looked at its meaningless groups of letters with awakened interest, for the mystery of the seal had touched some deep chord of suspicion and induced a state of mind alert for plots and secret hostilities.

Then with the telegram spread out on the table before him, and the cipher by his side, he worked out the groups letter by letter until at last the detached syllables fell together into this disturbing message—

"Fear serious conspiracy among native officers and officials. Keep under personal observation Mansur Effendi Awad, and if possible intercept his communications with Yousbashi Ahmed Hamdi at Hillet el Sheik. Report any important information obtained."

Burke put down the telegram and stood erect, again gazing vacantly across the river at the slice of brown desert with its trembling, streaming horizon.

"Mansur Effendi Awad! the clerk employed in the Post Office—and, by jove, in the Telegraph Office too!"

This thought came flashing into his mind with the certainty that of all men likely to want the cipher key, Mansur Effendi Awad was the first. Then came the inevitable deduction, "If he has copied the cipher he will have read this telegram."

Burke groped in his coat-pocket, found his case and took out a cigarette. He lit it with much deliberation, paying minute attention to the job, so that the end glowed uniformly in its whole bright circle, not irregularly as might happen with a hurried or careless smoker. A blue ring floated up into the still air as Burke, with a rigid concentration, set himself to explore the situation. Mansur was suspected of conspiracy. Mansur was a telegraph clerk. Mansur, therefore, would be the person most interested in getting hold of the cipher code and most capable of using it. It seemed clear that the envelope had been tampered with, so it might be assumed that Mansur had succeeded in getting access to the code. Well, *how* had he managed it? The code was always in the locked despatch-box, the key on Burke's chain by day and on the chair next his bed at night. Clearly the box could only be opened at night, and by one familiar with his habits—by one of his servants, in short.

"*Not* Billal." He called up the image of his faithful old black, smiled almost affectionately, and acquitted him. But could he as easily acquit Mahmud,

his Egyptian merasla? Heavy, dull, apparently quite honest, the fellow was still an Egyptian, and perhaps amenable to Mansur Effendi. Burke remembered, with awakening suspicion, how strongly the man had been recommended by the native police-officer when he took him as his orderly some months ago.

Sealing up the envelope into which he had put the cipher, Burke replaced it in the despatch-box, and ran through the contents of the latter to see whether anything was missing. There, for instance, were his gold sleeve-links, not worn since he left Khartum. Now, surely, Mahmud would have taken them if he has been knave enough to open the box. But no! To do so would have been merely to call attention to the envelope with its faked seal; and, moreover, if Mahmud had opened the box at all, it must have been as an agent only, and under the direction of some person clever enough to have made that excellent imitation of the key-impression. Robbery for its own sake would have formed no part in the programme. An idea came to Burke. Quietly pocketing the sleeve-links, he locked the box and put it back in its usual place. Then, lighting a fresh cigarette, he shouted through the door for Mahmud. A hulking figure, evidently just awakened from slumber, and adjusting its tarbush as it ran or rather stumbled across the compound, came to his call, and the orderly stood before his master with the usual laconic ejaculation, "Effendum."

Burke turned to him with severity.

"Mahmud," he said, "where are my gold sleeve-links?" His voice conveyed an accusation rather than a query, and was so understood by Mahmud, who, however, felt that he could clear himself. "In the locked box, oh Excellency," he replied.

"Nonsense," said Burke irritably. "Here! take the keys and find them." He flung the bunch over to the orderly, and puffing his cigarette with a great air of ferocity, in keeping with the *rôle* he had assumed, watched his servant closely. The latter fumbled stupidly with the keys, but ended by selecting the right one and opening the box. His big clumsy fingers went straight to the compartment whence Burke had just removed the links. Then, detecting their absence, he stood up, looking desperately at his master. "They were there, oh most excellent Bimbashi. Some one has done this to bring guilt upon me."

"That will do," said Burke. "The links must be found, or I shall know whom to punish. You can go!"

"By God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!" ejaculated the terrified Mahmud, "I would rather die than take the value of one millieme from your Highness;" but on the reiteration of the word "Go!" he backed out of the hut, still muttering protests and excuses, and his master was left alone.

"Alone indeed," thought the latter, as he sat down on the edge of the camp-bed. "Even my servants against me!" Mahmud's action had exactly fitted in with the theory that was forming itself in his mind. Too stupid to realise that he was giving himself away, the servant afforded evidence both that he was the sort of man that might be persuaded to assist a clever plotter, and that he actually had seen the inside of that box. It was clear that he had been the instrument of an enemy in obtaining possession of the code. Burke's head dropped between his hands as he set himself to think. Would it be best to take immediate action, arrest the orderly, frighten him into a confession, and thus find definite evidence of the guilt of the telegraph clerk? No; on second thoughts that course did not recommend itself. If there was really a widespread conspiracy the code would be by now in the possession of every disloyal telegraph clerk in the Sudan, and the suppression of one would do no good. Above all, the opportunity for watching Mansur Effendi, and perhaps getting to the root of the matter, would be lost. The best course was to carry on without appearing to suspect anything, until chance or his own wit might give him a further clue.

The first necessity was to let the Intelligence people know that the code was probably no longer secret. Burke even began to compose a cipher wire to that effect, when he suddenly remembered that it, too, would be read and probably held up or modified if his theory were correct. Then for the first time he realised the difficulty of his position. He had no alternative cipher, he could only communicate by letter, and the next post to North did not start for a fortnight. "Send a messenger." A moment's reflection taught him that if the conspirators were on the alert, his messenger would be stopped — and, indeed, who could he send? He took up the decoded telegram and read it over again. It seemed to imply a conspiracy more or less localised to Abu Zait and Hillet el Sheik. Was it safe to leave the Intelligence Department without notice of his suspicions for the present, or at least until they were confirmed? A few moments spent in weighing the pros and cons, and his decision was taken. Mansur must be outwitted at any cost, if the plot was to be successfully watched and defeated. He turned again to the writing-table and drafted the following wire to the Director of Intelligence:—

"Have entire confidence in Mansur Awad. Know nothing of communications with Hillet el Sheik, but will observe. Officers in my district well disposed to Government."

Having carefully rewritten the telegram in cipher, he called Mahmud and directed him to hand it to Mansur Effendi Awad for despatch.

"That ought to make his

mind easy," thought Burke with a smile, as he pictured his faithful clerk deciphering the wire before sending it North. "Mansur will be more certain than ever that I am a fool. Well, so much the better. Probably the Intelligence Department will think the same, but that can't be helped for the present." He lit another cigarette, and picking up his rifle, shouted to Billal, his old Sudanese servant, to carry his shot-gun and the ammunition. Conspiracy or not, he *must* have his afternoon prowl after game—or even after solitude.

In processes of induction, it is the first linking together of ideas into a coherent hypothesis that presents most difficulty. Once a theory has gathered unto itself sufficient evidence to give it weight, it goes ahead like a snowball on a slope, growing as it rolls. Burke deserved some credit for his penetration in building up his facts so far as they had gone. Accident brought the next clue almost at once. He was in the habit of chatting with his old orderly on these shooting expeditions, and this evening he found himself dilating on the sport to be had in other countries, partly to "draw" the old black in defence of the Sudan, partly for the mere pleasure of recalling great days when he had hunted ibex in a cherished "nullah" in Cashmere. The thought of those fragrant pine-forests and the cool stream by which he had pitched his camp, the glorious climb up into the snows, and the never-to-be-forgotten moment when his shikari, dragging him down into cover, had pointed silently to that noble beast, his first and finest head,—how cool and delightful the very recollection was in this parched brown land!

"Wallahi, ye Billal! el said ragid fi balad el Hinde!" "The game in that country of India is plentiful."

He looked round at the old soldier to see the responsive eagerness in his face, and saw to his surprise that the man was troubled and ill at ease. "What's the matter?" he asked. "Are you ill or mazloom?" "Mazloom" is an eloquent expression freely used in Arabic to signify discontent.

"Excellency," said the old black, "I am mazloom from the name of that country of India! I wish to stay with my own people. I am too old to cross the sea."

"Cross the sea? Go to India?" Burke laughed. "What empty words are these, Billal? Who has been telling you stories?"

"The Bimbashi knows everything," answered Billal, "and he knows whether I shall go with my battalion to India or stay as orderly to his Excellency."

"Is the XXth Battalion going to India, then?" Burke was still laughing, but something in his servant's expression made him pause. The old man was in deadly earnest, even in trouble and perplexity. There was something behind it all, and Burke grew serious. "Tell me what you are driving at,"

he said. "This nonsense must cease. You have been listening to lies. I must know all."

"Excellency," said the black, "there came lately to Abu Zait a soldier of my battalion from the company at Hillet el Sheik. It was from him I learnt what I now tell you, though doubtless your Excellency knows all and I a part only. It is said, oh Bimbashi, that the English make war upon the sons of Islam that dwell in the mountains of that Indian country. It is said, too, that victory is not with them, and that they have been driven back with great slaughter before the bullets of the Faithful. Then, Excellency, we are told that Kitchener Pasha, knowing that there are no soldiers like the Sudanese, and mindful of Atbara and Omdurman, has ordered that four battalions shall be sent to help him, and it is certain that the XXth, the greatest battalion in the army, is about to go North from Wad Gharbu in the next month. This is spoken of amongst the soldiers, and we wish neither to cross the sea nor to fight against the Faithful nor to leave our wives and our children. Your Excellency knows all and I a part only."

Burke whistled softly. The company at Hillet el Sheik! The company commanded by Yousbashi Ahmet Effendi Hamdi!

"Has this story been told to the soldiers at Wad Gharbu also?" he asked.

"Assuredly it has," was the answer, "for Faragallah Adam, the soldier who told me, had spent two days at Wad Gharbu on his journey here."

Burke recollected that a man of the XXth Sudanese had indeed arrived and gone North by the last mail-boat on transfer to the Prison Department at Khartum. No doubt he had brought letters from Ahmed Hamdi to Mansur,—just the sort of communications that the telegram had warned him to intercept. Well, they had reached their destination this time, and there was no help for it. But here, at least, was part of the plot. This sowing of distrust amongst the Sudanese battalions, so loyal to their English officers that nothing short of a kindled religious fanaticism could possibly estrange them, was an obvious end for the conspirators. "Billal," said Burke, "these things are lies, and whoever said them is the Father of lies. The English have soldiers enough in India to conquer all their enemies, and plenty to send here as well if they are wanted. The XXth Battalion is going to Kassala, and no farther. Is that enough?"

"It is enough," said Billal, and the shining black face resumed its normal expression of content.

But one convert was not sufficient. The XXth Battalion must be undeceived, and Purvis, their commanding officer, warned of the rumour. How to send information without exciting the suspicion that he had a clue to the plot was the question. Until that morning he had never suspected himself

of any particular turn for duplicity, but the mystery and perhaps danger that surrounded him put all his faculties on edge, and he found himself probing deep into the intricacies of oriental life, anticipating the probable thoughts and actions of subtle adversaries and bringing an equal cunning to the task of defeating them. He experienced a strange elation, a feeling of perfect confidence in his own sharpened perceptions, a certainty that his inductions must be infallible. It was clear to him that he would be observed in every action, that every messenger would be stopped, every message read, unless he so blinded his opponents that the messenger could pass unrecognised. It was imperative that Purvis should know of the disturbing rumour current in his battalion. How to inform him was the question. Billal must take a letter. Yes, but how? A solution of the difficulty came to him in a flash that was little short of inspiration.

"Billal!" He turned suddenly to the orderly at his side, "I am going to dismiss you."

"Dismiss me, Excellency?"

"Yes, for theft!"

"Your Excellency is laughing at me."

"No indeed. You return to your battalion by the post-boat to-morrow."

"As the Bimbashi orders."

The old man stood to attention and saluted, but the look on his face baffled description. Burke laid his hand affectionately on his servant's shoulder.

"I will tell you how things stand," said he. "There are enemies here who are plotting against the Hakuma (Government). They will suspect you and search you if I send you openly with a message to Purvis Bey. Now, it is necessary to send a message to the Bey, and you must take it, and so we must be as cunning as those evil ones in order to overcome them. I shall write the message now, and hide it in the lining of your tarbush. When we reach the station, Mahmud, your fellow-servant, will accuse you of theft. I shall send for you, question you, and hear the evidence against you. You will pretend to be frightened and confused, and although you deny the theft, yet I shall call the staff-officer, and in his presence dismiss you and order him to transfer you to your battalion at Wad Gharbu. When you get there, you must give my message to the Bey. Fear nothing, for I shall explain to him that the accusation is only a pretence, and ask him to send you back to me in a few days. Do you understand?"

"I understand."

"Remember my instructions, then."

"Haadur, Effendum."

Burke scribbled a hurried note on a page of his pocket-book, addressed it, folded in small, and saw it safely tucked under the greasy lining of Billal's tarbush. Then, picking up their weapons and the field-glasses, the two tramped home in silence.

And, sure enough, that very evening after dinner Mahmud

was sent for. "Have you found my sleeve-links?" asked Burke.

"No, most excellent Bimbashi."

"Then you must have stolen them. Who else has access to my hut except yourself?"

"Oh, High One, have I not worked faithfully for you for many months, and never taken as much as the value of a millieme? Am I the only servant of your Excellency, or is not the black soldier, Billal, also with me in this house?"

"Oh, you accuse Billal! Well, call him and let me hear what he says!"

So Billal was sent for, seen to waver and hesitate, and finally dismissed from his master's service and ignominiously handed over to the staff-officer for transfer to his battalion. But Burke spared the faithful old fellow the disgrace of being made a prisoner, saying merely that the evidence was not enough for trial, but sufficient to make it unwise to retain the man as an orderly.

And so Burke's only faithful follower left Abu Zait, and his isolation was complete.

The stay-at-home European has many advantages over the dweller in the desert, but one compensation the latter enjoys which should help to reconcile him to his solitude — the delight of sleeping in the open air. There are many, no doubt, who do it night after night without realising their good fortune; but to the man capable of enjoying the good things of life, what can be equal to that spread-out of the tired body on camp-bed or angerib, that caress of the cool evening breeze across heated limbs at first untroubled by bed-clothes, then, as the day's warmth quits the air, luxuriously covered by a sheet and perhaps a blanket or two?—for the night sharpens as it passes on towards morning. And, above all, to lie horizontal under the stars and watch the Great Bear with his shining company in their glorious procession across the limpid infinity of space. Oh, Africa! how the heart turns to thee from this dull western world! But Burke, though not usually insensible to such influences, forgot them to-night. Sleep would not come to him. The mental activity that had driven him so vividly all through the day refused to quit him now, and the tired brain, like a carrier on a forced march, reeled and staggered under its load. The night seemed full of eyes—hostile, vigilant, the eyes of relentless enemies. Sounds that the normal man is unconscious of caused him to start, lean up on elbow and listen, with fingers on the grip of his revolver. Was that a step? No; it came no nearer nor departed farther. It was a broken durra-stalk anchored to its root, and tapping the ground under the motion of the breeze. A burst of sound! *What?* Only the sudden altercation of prowling hyenas that competed for some more than usually tasty morsel

in their midnight scavenging. Then came a moment or so of troubled half-sleep, broken by the rustle of some bird through the darkness, and Burke lay wide awake again, his mind working wearily back over the events of the past day. Was he merely deceiving himself? After all, what were his inductions worth? Might not Mahmud have seen those links in their place when he himself had, some time, opened the despatch-box? The story of India for the Sudanese troops! Was there ever a time when some wild rumour was not circulating among those dark incomprehensible soldiers, all unknown to their British officers? And his wire to the Intelligence Department—that crowning achievement of his subtlety! What rubbish it would seem to a decent normal Briton like Chesterfield-Smith. His thoughts turned to poor old Billal, lying in his quarters disgraced among his fellows, and under a suspicion that must be galling to the proud, faithful old soldier. He had been much too clever! A hard place in the mattress seemed to drive its way into the very bone of his hip, and he flung restlessly round on his other side.

The seal! That, at least, was unmistakable and material evidence that the cipher had been tampered with. Unmistakable—*was it?* There were two depressions, just as there should have been. They had seemed at first to be quite correct, then—*was* one so much deeper than the other? And if so, might not some unequal application of force on his own part, at the time of making the impression, explain it all?

This thought gripped him until he felt that the matter must be set at rest, or sleep banished for ever. He rose, stumbled into the dark hut where the mud-brick walls were still radiating out the stored-up heat of yesterday, and, lighting his lamp, groped for the envelope where he believed he had laid it. It was not there. He dived for the despatch-box, opened it, found the new envelope duly sealed, but no old one. Where could it be? He remembered cutting along the top, so as not to injure the wax. He thought he recalled placing it on that little table in the corner of the room, which he had just searched in vain. Could he have torn it up? He groped in the waste-paper basket. There at last were the pieces, and, of all things, torn right across the seal so that the wax had parted in a dozen fragments and fallen from the paper. He cursed his stupidity. What a fool he had been! Or—had he torn it? Was it not possible that here, too, his enemies had intervened? The hut might have been visited by any one while he was out shooting. Oh, ten times a fool to have forgotten that Mansur, if he had indeed attempted to reproduce the impression on the wax, would want all information bearing on whether his attempt had successfully deceived.

Burke stood erect with the torn fragments in his hand. The sweat lay cold on his forehead. He felt baffled and absurd—if there was no plot, absurd; if a plot, then baffled and still absurd.

Well, the night must be passed in any case. He blew out the candle-lamp and moved out through the verandah towards his bed. *What was that?* He stopped abruptly, eyes and ears intent, probing the darkness. Had not a figure flitted across the narrow angle of the compound? Not a sound broke the stillness as he listened, but could his eyes have deceived him? He passed rapidly to where the compound wall abutted on a dry hollow that had once been a water-channel, and listened again. Nothing stirred, or nothing except that broken durra-stalk—unless indeed that was the rattle of a falling stone down there in the water-course. He sprang over the wall, ran in the direction of the sound, found nothing, made a cast up the channel, and again stilled his pulses to listen.

Ugh! His nerves were all in a jangle. It was imagination—nothing else.

So he went back to bed, and finally to sleep.

A shave, a tub, and a brisk walk in the cool freshness of the morning dissipated the stale aftermath of a restless night, and Burke strolled down to the District Office no longer hag-ridden but cool and clear-headed for whatever the day might bring forth. He felt the need to strike a mean between the credulity of yesterday and the doubts of last night. He must be committed to no theory, must have a perfectly open mind, able to give each observation its due weight and no more. So faced, the situation was not uninteresting. Abu Zait was a dull place as a rule, but with this investigation in hand it became full of exciting possibilities. In his heart of hearts he was a little proud of this ability to look on critically at the unfolding of events fraught perhaps with terrible danger for himself. It was with what almost amounted to a swagger that he traversed the group of saluting policemen and bowing natives and entered his office. The Mamur (Assistant Magistrate) with obsequious geniality introduced the morning's business: a few trifling disputes to be settled, a sheik to be interviewed, a complaint by a Greek trader against a Coptic quartermaster-sergeant to be investigated. Then came Mansur Effendi himself, a very low tarbush—an unerring badge of nationalist sentiments—placed well on the back of his head and his myopic eyes gleaming sly and inscrutable behind his glasses. He came to request that a certain police corporal, a man decidedly above the average in intelligence but not in other soldierly qualities, might be lent to the Postal Department during the illness of one of the subordinate clerks. Now Burke knew that this corporal had been recently at Hillet el Sheik, and somehow, in spite of his determination to be free

from preconceived theories, his suspicions began to work again. "Did the corporal wish to undertake this duty?" he asked. The corporal was anxious to do so. "Had he any previous experience as a clerk?" Oh yes, he had worked in the office of Yousbashi Ahmed Effendi Hamdi while stationed at Hillet el Sheik. Burke elaborated a flowing design on the blotting-pad as he digested this piece of information. It looked badly on the face of it, and yet, would the corporal have quoted such a reference if that telegram warning Burke against Mansur and this very Ahmed Hamdi had been read? On the other hand, the corporal might not be in that secret. He decided to see how far Mansur was set on having this particular corporal.

"There is the sergeant at the Zaptea," he said, "why not take him instead? He is of higher rank and a very good clerk." Mansur looked greatly disappointed. "Ah no, sir. He is not suitable for postal duties. His eyesight is deficient, and moreover he is a man of shallow mind."

Eyesight deficient, indeed! Burke sent for the medical officer and the sergeant in question, and requested expert opinion upon the point at once. The medical opinion formed after a dramatic but cursory examination of the lids of the patient—Abu Zait did not run to Snellen's tests—was to the effect that the sergeant, while admirably equipped for duty at the Zaptea, was quite unfitted for work at the Post Office. Burke eyed the medical officer suspiciously. "So you are in it, too!" he thought.

"Well," said he aloud, "let us see which of the two takes down a telegram most successfully. Mansur Effendi, please give each man a pen and paper." Thus armed, the sergeant and the corporal stood, each with the paper held close to his eyes and the pen at the ready, determined to show off to the very best advantage.

"Write as follows," said Burke, and in his best Arabic he gave the following sentence, watching its effect not only on the competitors but on the other occupants of the room: "The XXth Battalion Sudanese will hold itself in readiness to proceed at once to——" Burke glanced upwards, hoping to detect a strained attention here, an anxious flutter there, but not a lid quivered,— "Kassala," he concluded, and received the two samples for comparison.

There was no doubt as to which was the best. Besides, thought he, it might be just as well to give the plotters all the rope they would take. So much the sooner would they give him an opening. So the corporal was duly allotted to the Post Office, and the group moved out of the room, leaving Burke to complete a few books and sign a letter or two. He could see the telegraph clerk in deep conversation with the doctor in the verandah outside the office, and scraps of their conversation came to him where he sat. "When is the

post-boat due from Hillet el Sheik?" asked the medical officer. "Inshalleh, the steamer will be here by 5 P.M. this afternoon," answered Mansur, "unless she runs on the sand by Shellal el Sint. Come with me, oh respected physician, for I would speak with you alone." The voices became inaudible as the two men receded from the office window, and Burke, rapidly finishing what work remained to be done, made his way through the village and back to his quarters.

During lunch, and after it when he played at a siesta, Burke's mind continued to dwell on the same problem, this question of a plot, which had for the present driven out all other questions. One thing at least was clear—that he must intercept the mail from Hillet el Sheik. The telegram had practically ordered him to do so, and that conversation, overheard just before lunch, hinted that to-day's mail might be of importance, was at least eagerly awaited. It is not pleasant to have to open other people's letters, but duty is duty!—and indeed the investigation had caught Burke's fancy more than he realised, so that he turned his thoughts to the matter with less reluctance than he had expected. He knew that the custom was for Mansur Effendi to meet the boat and personally take over the mail-bag from the engineer. To anticipate this, he must board the steamer upstream of Abu Zait. How was that to be done? After considering a moment, he recollected that he had noticed a shilluk ("dug out") in a creek some miles up the bank, at a point where he often bagged a duck or two in his evening prowls. He looked at his watch. It was now 3 P.M. and the steamer was due at 5. Better start at once. Taking down his shot-gun and filling his pockets with cartridges, he strolled through the village and took the track across the marshy ground that bordered the river bank, his mind occupied for the moment, regretfully, with the thought of poor old Billal, so often his companion on this beat and now awaiting the post-boat to return in her to Wad Gharbu. A native officer emerged from some huts, saw him, and saluted. Burke acknowledged the salute after a rather ostentatious shift of the gun from under his right arm to his left shoulder. He felt the necessity to make all his actions explicable in terms of sport, for who knew what observant eyes might be following his movements. A mile or so on, at a bend of the river, where a low hill shut out the station from view, he struck the creek and found the little canoe amongst the rushes. Here, under a clump of dôm-palm, whence he could scan the long reaches of the river to the south, he waited in comfort, watching the shadows lengthen as the westering sun dipped towards a golden horizon. His glance dwelt lazily on the mighty stream slipping past so silent and strong on its eternal

journey. There was comfort in it, a hint that plots and plotters were things of time, an assurance that the great stream of human destiny is but little disturbed by the throbs and struggles of individual will. A silvery fish leaped clean above the surface, while a heavy swirl of water and a dark fin, visible for a second like a knife-blade slicing the eddy, indicated the presence in the depths beneath of a relentless pursuer. A line of pelicans, sweeping south across the evening sky on slow and even pinions, caught his eye and saved him from a too close application of the silent river and its hidden tragedies to things less remote. As he followed their flight he perceived the column of smoke that stood for the expected steamer, her hull still invisible owing to a sharp bend of the Nile. It was time to be moving, as a few moments would bring her round the corner and abreast of where he stood, so crouching into the narrow canoe and using the butt of his gun for a paddle, he put out on to the bosom of the stream. The post-boat rounded the point, her steam-whistle emitting a long signal to advertise the station of her approach. Burke, waving his hat and shouting, caught the attention of the engineer on the bridge, who, with the deference of a sensible Greek to the mad escapades of British officers, slowed down and took him aboard, even permitting one of his men to row the dug-out back to the creek and rejoin the ship over land. So the first phase was accomplished, and the second must begin at once, for there was no time to spare. Burke did not mince matters. Hailing the engineer to the cabin, where he had installed himself, he demanded the mail-bag from Hillet el Sheik.

"It is against orders, excellent Bimbashi," protested the Greek.

"Nevertheless I must have it and open it!" reiterated Burke. "I take all responsibility, but must remind you that time is passing."

"If the Bimbashi will give me a written order——!" The Greek was ready for a compromise. Burke scribbled an order, took over the bag, and commenced operations at once, as the engineer returned to the bridge to direct the manœuvre of coming alongside. It was high time. The steamer had already commenced the wide sweep that would bring her to the landing-stage with her bow up-stream against the current. The letters were few and quickly sorted, chiefly official and addressed to the Inspector and O.C. Police Detachment,—in other words, to Burke himself in his official capacity. Two only deserved attention, both being in the same type of cheaply perfumed envelope, both addressed in the same handwriting, and both in purple ink,—one to El Kateb Mansur Effendi Awad, the other to Saag. Hassan Effendi Fadel, Medical Corps. Hurriedly transferring these to his pocket, Burke closed the bag, drawing tight the chain that

ran through the metal eye-holes in its neck. Then, and not till then, was he aware that the seal which he had broken in opening the bag bore the official stamp of the Posts Department. Such a stamp was kept only by the departmental officials, and none was to be had on the boat. Burke glanced hurriedly through the cabin window. The steamer was actually alongside the landing-stage, and there, waiting for the mails, was Mansur Effendi himself. The matter must be carried through with a high hand. Burke picked up his gun and the open mail-bag, and having waited a moment on deck to let the gangway be adjusted, walked coolly across it and up to Mansur Effendi.

"There," he said, handing him the bag. "I opened this one by mistake. It's the bag from Hillet el Sheik, not that from Wad Gharbu as I thought. I'm expecting a note from Purvis Bey in the latter, so please send it up at once if you come across it. It is important, and the answer should go back by this boat." He leaped to land and started to move off without any explanation of his breach of postal regulations, when a thought struck him and he turned and reascended the gangway. Passing up to the engineer, who was still giving directions from the bridge, "You gave me the wrong bag," he said.

"No, Excellency," protested the other, "that was the bag from Hillet el Sheik. Of that I am certain."

"Exactly," said Burke; "but I asked you for that from Wad Gharbu!"

"Excellency, I assure you!"

Burke allowed a shade of annoyance to be visible on his face. "You don't imagine I'm expecting letters from a station where there are only Egyptian officers? I wanted an urgent message from Purvis Bey in order to answer it by this steamer. You should have attended to my order. Do so another time."

The Greek dived his hand into his pocket and produced that written order. "See, sir!" He held it out in triumph. "Hillet el Sheik!"

"How exceedingly stupid of me," said Burke, frankly apologetic. "I can't think how I made the mistake, but I see that I myself am to blame. The letter from Purvis Bey is in the other bag. I expect I shall be obliged to detain you for an answer."

The engineer was at once in the best of good-humour. "Sir," he said, "I am obliged to take in wood for the return journey. I cannot start before 6.30 P.M. There is plenty of time." So Burke, shouldering his gun, passed out through the crowd on the landing-stage and up to his quarters. "Mansur will suspect me, of course," thought he, "but had I forgotten to square the engineer he would have absolutely caught me out." He laid the gun on the camp-bed and dropped into a long chair in the verandah. "Fool," he muttered to himself. "That was much too narrow a shave." But he felt the letters in his

pocket, and knew that in that matter at least he had succeeded.

Instead of his usual after-dinner programme of a pipe and novel on the verandah, Burke, after his raid on the Hillet el Sheik mail-bag, brought his candle-lamp inside the hut, and taking Spiro's 'Arabic Dictionary' from a shelf, set himself to go through the stolen letters. Reasonably speaking, the verandah was lonely enough in all conscience, but the wide empty darkness around his little candle-lamp seemed too populous for such a deed, and he sought the more visible solitude of indoors. Truth to tell, he felt thoroughly ashamed of the whole business, and more inclined to be alone with his familiar confidential walls than with the cold criticism of the stars.

"Here goes, then!"

Out came the two letters, both scented, both addressed in purple ink, both reeking with the ultra-civilisation of Young Egypt. Selecting that addressed to Mansur Effendi, he carefully steamed the envelope, opened it, and spread the letter on his blotting-pad. The fluent, careless writing, so different from the Arabic that we read in our study of the language, was baffling at first, but gradually words emerged here and there and in their turn gave clues to others, until at last, between Spiro and speculation, Burke had pretty well mastered the document. And a funny document it was.

"*To the* Clerk, MANSUR EFFENDI AWAD, the beloved.

"After the usual compliments, this is to tell you that all things at Hillet el Sheik resemble pitch. Thanks to Allah! the Second Lieutenant Mahmud Effendi Bakri is ill with fever. He is a bad officer. His conduct resembles that of his ancestor, the dog. Avoid him if you should be near him. His company is injurious. Send to your friend, by first post-boat, three bottles of whisky, one bottle of lime-juice, and three heads of sugar. Also send two hundred cigarettes. The price of these articles shall be repaid to you by the Translator, Sadek Effendi Taleb, now at Khartum. This official owes me much money. Onions are cheap here.

"AHMED HAMDI,
Yousbashi, XXth Battalion."

Burke put down the letter and laughed heartily. "A captain in the army writing to his pal that onions are cheap! Good Heavens!" thought he, "how *are* we to understand these fellows?" He read it over again with fresh amusement, thankful too that there was no conspiracy in it. Then he took up the second letter. Was it worth opening? He almost decided against doing so, but, perhaps as much for the diversion of another such epistle as from any expectation of discovering sedition, opened it also. Somehow, he felt less compunction in reading private letters that so withheld their intimacies, and once more, with

Spiro to help him and imagination to fill up the blanks, he set himself to his problem. This letter, too, gradually delivered up its secrets. It was very largely a damning criticism of the character and antecedent of one Girgis el Solibi, a Medical Corps orderly and the only representative of his Department at Hillet el Sheik.

"This Copt," said the Yousbashi, "thinks more of his monthly return of medical comforts than of the needs of those whom God has afflicted with fever. On last Saturday my temperature rose to 105 degrees and I approached near to death, but this son of a dog denied me cognac, though I gave him a written order, and would issue nothing but a white powder named 'Benger,' which dried my stomach like sawdust. His quinine also he mixes with flour and sells it to civilians. I thank God that much evidence will be available when he is brought before a court-martial, for the Faithful spit at the sight of this accursed Nazarene. Hasten to make your annual inspection; and do your loving friend the favour of reporting me unfit to serve in this place. I ask God to witness that my spleen is very large. Hasten to help one who loves you." So far Burke had translated with great amusement, and only one line remained. He nerved himself for a final struggle with the language and resumed. "El bussel—onions." "Oh Lord, here we are at onions again!" thought Burke; "hina—here, rachis—cheap." Burke exploded with delight. "Onions are cheap here! No letter is complete without a note on the price of onions. Oh Egypt!" Burke laid down the letter and lit his pipe. "They're not such terrible conspirators after all," he thought, carefully fitting the letters back into their envelopes and gumming them up. "I'll drop them at the landing-stage so that it may seem that they fell from the open bag."

Strolling down to the village through the cool night air, he accomplished his mission and went home to bed and to sleep.

Two days had passed since the episode of the Hillet el Sheik mail, two long monotonous days, during which the stream of evidence had quite dried up, no fresh facts coming to light either to support or weaken the case against the telegraph clerk. Burke had alternated between moods of deep suspicion and intervals in which the everyday routine seemed so permanent that all this talk of plots faded off into mirage and hot air.

After a morning passed uneventfully at the office and a police kit-inspection after lunch, he lay at ease in a long chair and sipped his afternoon tea on the shady side of the verandah, watching a little lizard capture fly after fly on the whitewashed wall below the thatch. The mottled head and yellow throat were just visible from under a rafter. The quick eyes surveyed the wide space of wall below, im-

placable and keen, suggesting the lithe body and tense muscles ready to respond to their every message. "Buzz." A lazy fly, perhaps the very one that had haunted Burke's forehead as he lay awake at dawn, swooped downwards and lit on the danger zone. Like a flash the watcher was upon it and back again to his lair with his captured prey. "I wonder when they'll swoop on me!" said Burke. Everything reminded him of that unsolved problem; his mind might wander for a moment, but always near the surface was that inevitable preoccupation. He rose impatiently. "The thing is getting on my nerves," he muttered irritably, taking up a book and resuming his seat, not to read but to think again. Billal should reach Wad Gharbu to-morrow, and Purvis be warned in time to dispel that infernal story. The mail south from Khartum starts on Wednesday and should get here eight days later, bringing details to supplement that telegram from Chesterfield-Smith. Until then he could only speculate as to what grounds there were for suspecting a conspiracy. He began to con over the whole story from the beginning. How idiotic he had been to destroy that envelope, if indeed he *had* destroyed it. Or if this too had been the action of an enemy, how completely successful it had been. He realised that his induction rested almost entirely on that envelope.

If his momentary impression had been correct, then there was everything to fear. If he had been mistaken, there was absolutely nothing to implicate Mansur except the original telegram. He reached for a stick of sealing-wax, lit a candle, and made a series of a dozen stamps with his key. Placed side by side they were almost exactly the same, and yet there were minor differences. He cut out the two extreme variants, searched for a lens, and examined them closely by its aid. Yes, undoubtedly a mistake might arise. Why had he not checked his opinion in this deliberate way at the time? And yet the very fact that he had not done so, that he had been perfectly certain and felt the need for no further investigation!—surely this in itself almost settled the matter. Or was it possible that the cipher telegram had prepared his mind for mysterious discoveries, and excited an unconscious suspicion? Was it really "suggestion" that had made the dissimilarity between the key and the seal so obvious? It was undeniable that he had noted this dissimilarity and formed his opinion before he deciphered the wire. Talking of wires, here came an orderly with what looked like one in his hand. Burke strode out to meet him, tore open the red cover, and glanced at the telegram.

"The advance company of XXth Sudanese left Wad Gharbu yesterday evening on steamer *Nasser* for Khartum. Will stop at Abu Zait for wood fuel. ISWID."

It must be explained that in the Sudan, where coal is not obtainable except by import and at a high price, the steamers burn wood, which is cut and stored at various points along the Nile bank. The bulk of this fuel makes frequent refills necessary, and Abu Zait, being so situated that a constant supply was available, had become one of the recognised wood-stations on this reach of the river. "Iswid" was the code word for "XXth Battalion, Sudanese."

Burke dismissed the orderly and sat down again to consider this fresh situation. Obviously the company had started before Billal could possibly have arrived with his warning to Purvis. The flooded Nile—it was the month of September—made it impossible for a steamer to reach Wad Gharbu in less than four days, while the strong current made it probable that the *Nasser* would reach Abu Zait by to-morrow morning. Well, then, the company might still be under the impression that its destination was the Indian Frontier, and not Kassala at all. What an opportunity for the Egyptian officers in command to foment mutiny among the men. Burke knew that Purvis must stay with the headquarters of the battalion, and of his two British Bimbashis, one was on detachment at Fula and the other on leave. It was certain that neither of them would be with the advanced company. Well, the first thing was to arrange for the wood-supply. Burke rose, slipped on his coat, found a sun-helmet, and started for the village. He had donned stalking-boots with string soles, intending to pick up a gazelle, if possible, on his evening stroll, but this was now out of the question. Work must be done in spite of the fact that an Arab had reported a herd of "ariel" at a neighbouring khore, so he strode on silently and impatiently over the sandy path. Down by the landing-stage, seated on the stacks of faggots or on camp-chairs, he could see a group of native officers and clerks enjoying their afternoon chat by the river. As he got nearer he recognised the inevitable Mansur, the staff-officer, the doctor, —all the usual gossipers. He was close upon them now, but occupied with their talk, or perhaps because his footfall was muffled by his stalking-boots, they had not yet perceived his approach. How they gabbled, to be sure, with gesture and shrug to amplify their words—Mansur, as usual, leading the discussion. Burke was almost among them, when at last somebody looked up and a silence fell except for one voice. Mansur, whose back was turned to the Inspector, held on in his eager discourse, "El bussel hina rachis!"—"Onions are cheap here!"

Burke stopped as if shot, his face disconcerted and tense. Mansur was silent, turning round towards his chief with confusion on his countenance. All the officers betrayed surprise, and, reflecting perhaps Burke's own expression, uncertainty and anxiety. One

buttoned up the open neck of his khaki tunic, another hurriedly removed a gaudy silk handkerchief from under his tarbush, and proceeded to an ineffectual salute. Then the moment of acute embarrassment passed, and Burke, calling up his usual manner with an effort, said a polite good-evening, and expressed to the staff-officer his wish that sufficient fuel should be ready to supply the *Nasser* on the morrow.

Finally, after exchanging a word with the police officer, and gradually bringing things back to normal, he pointed to his boots and explained his sudden appearance. "I was about to go shooting," he said. "I came on you so silently that you did not hear me. I hope I did not disturb you." A chorus of negatives and much polite protest followed, during which Burke withdrew, and left the party to continue their conversation.

Burke sat down to his dinner that evening with much to occupy his mind. The situation was now perfectly clear to him. Once more possessed with that certainty of induction that had gripped him at the commencement of this story, he found the facts fitting into his hypothesis so aptly that coincidence might reasonably be excluded.

That one sentence, overheard when he surprised the group of officers, had supplied the clue to those letters, otherwise so incredibly silly and meaningless. In the light of it, he now interpreted the situation as follows. Obviously a code had been arranged by the conspirators, and in it that bizarre remark, "Onions are cheap here," implied "Be on your guard. We are observed." It could hardly be doubted that some confederate at Khartum had discovered that the Intelligence Department was on the track of the plot. Obviously he had wired to the chief organiser, Yousbashi Ahmed Hamdi, warning him to be on his guard and to caution the others. Hamdi, fearing a censorship on telegrams, had written to his two chief adherents at Abu Zait letters that could convey nothing to an outsider, yet with their hidden message, "Be on your guard."

Exactly the same thing had happened this evening. Mansur, made aware by some sign that the Inspector was near, had stopped a seditious conversation by the code-sentence. The manner of the officers had spoken more clearly than words. He had never seen a more guilty-looking gathering. There could be no question now of the reality of a conspiracy. All he could do was to anticipate active measures, and if possible defeat them.

Dinner drew to a close, and Mahmud, in spotless galabieh and red cummerbund, cleared the table and left his master to his thoughts.

Burke's effort now was to place himself in his enemies' position and imagine how he himself would act in like circumstances. He could place their activities, as far as his

knowledge went, under two heads.

Under the first he grouped all attempts to intercept communications, as for instance the capturing of the Intelligence Cipher, and intercommunication between conspirators, such as the arrangement of a code. Secondly, there were active measures of revolt, the only one which he had yet discovered being the spreading of discontent amongst the Sudanese troops.

He must needs accept the fact that his enemies had succeeded as regarded group number one. How were the active revolutionary measures likely to develop?

To begin with, he was bound to assume that the opportunity was now or never. Granted that the move of the XXth Battalion was being advertised as an attempt to send Sudanese troops to India, this theory could only remain credible while the advance company was actually travelling north. The moment they turned south-east again towards Kassala, as would happen at once on their arrival at Atbara, the lie would be given to all such stories. How, then, would he himself act in such a case? Pressing his forehead down on his hands, he struggled to project himself into the position of an Egyptian officer bent on striking a deadly blow at the British occupation.

"Time, now! Place—well, what condition must the place fulfil?" He ran through the strategic considerations bearing on locality. Absence of a possibly hostile military force. Presence of confederates. Position on lines of communication. Accessibility to large and warlike native communities capable of being inflamed by Islamic propaganda. Burke rose from his chair, selected and lit a cigarette, and glanced down at the lights of the village. "*Abu Zait,*" he said. The possibilities of the position gripped him till he forgot to be a partisan and remembered only that he was a soldier. Eagerly he took up point after point of his plan. He would inflame the Sudanese till every man on that steamer was ready to shoot the first British officer that appeared. He could land at Abu Zait, shoot the Inspector, join hands with the already disaffected police, and raise the standard of revolt, calling to the Jihâd that splendid fighting tribe the Giloudi Arabs of the west. Then, with determined men at Wad Gharbu and Fula, two revolver shots would get rid of Purvis and Vachell, and it would be simple to inflame the whole of the XXth Battalion with a hatred of a distant campaign against the children of the Faith. Oh, how the rebellion grew! All the troops to the south in arms against the Government, the few British in the Bahr-el-Ghazal murdered or starved out, the Arabs in fanatical revolt, the wild Sudanese tribes joining their brothers in the battalions and leaping to arms. What could the handful of white troops in Khartum effect against such a conflagration? What, indeed! The zest of invention

left him, and he saw himself not leading a successful revolt, but confronting one. Granted that a conspiracy was on foot, it *must* develop on these lines or not at all. Well, a conspiracy *was* on foot. So much for the Inspector at Abu Zait. His duty was clear. He must board the ship at once on its arrival and put it to the men themselves that their destination was Kassala, and Kassala only.

"Fool," said an inner voice, "do you imagine that they will let you reach the deck?"

"If it must be," came the answer, "death is no sweeter on the shore than on the gangway. Do your duty, and God help you!"

And Burke, with his mind at last free from doubt, lay down to a slumber that was quiet and undisturbed.

Sleep is but a short respite in the struggle that we call life. The new dawn crept up, pale and cold, into the darkness of the East. It grew and strengthened, embraced the world in its white arms, trembled, blushed crimson, and gave place to day.

"My last, perhaps!"

Burke sat up and swept the horizon with his glance, conscious of the abrupt transit from drowsy freedom to the high and perhaps tragic duties of his awakening. There to the south was the smoke column of the *Nasser*, black and dense at the funnel top, fanned out into grey gauze above under the gentle buffets of the morning breeze. It seemed to move through wide verdure, for the steamer had not yet rounded the point where she would be visible upon the river.

Burke rose, dressed hurriedly, took his revolver from its case, then after a moment's thought replaced it and picked up a camel stick instead, and having swallowed a cup of tea and a biscuit that Mahmud had put ready for him in the verandah, started for the landing-stage. Quite a large group had formed there, officers, civilians, employees, a fatigue-party to help with the wood, and the usual contingent of onlookers. Mansur Effendi could be seen in earnest conversation with the medical officer a little apart from the others. Burke passed through the crowd, acknowledging salutes to left and right, and placed himself at the edge of the wharf as the little vessel, sweeping from the far bank, came alongside with her nose up-stream against the current.

Ropes were flung and caught, the stern dragged level, a plank passed across as a gangway, and Burke, with a glance up at the sea of wild black faces on the steamer's deck, stepped boldly on to the narrow timber.

The mind works rapidly at such a moment. Love of life, fear of death, swift speculation as to the manner of it, whether a blinding rifle-flash from above or the cold pang of a dagger from behind!—all these ideas leaped together into one instant of thought.

A voice rang out shrill and piercing from the ship.

"Stop him! Seize him!"

Cries rose on all sides, and the soldiers on the boat swarmed madly to the foot of the gangway. Burke lifted his eyes. An Egyptian officer with fierce anxiety written on his face, and an outstretched finger pointing full at him, was calling to those on shore to stop him.

A cold, slow, incisive voice in his inmost heart said, "God help me. It is the end." With shoulders squared and head thrown back, he took a pace forward. Crash! The plank broke under him, and with a wild sway and a clutch at the gunwale, Burke drove downward into the brown billows of the flood. A swirl of broken light and rising bubbles, a sickening shock driving through his being like red fire, and he knew no more.

A fortnight had passed, and Burke, propped up on pillows in his quarters and well on the way to recovery, could look back at his obsession with comprehension, almost with amusement. He had heard the whole story of his accident in minute detail from several sources—from the doctor, the staff-officer, and even Mansur himself, the hero of the event.

They described how Burke had stepped heavily on to the plank—an old one, that should never have been used for the purpose. At this point of the story the staff-officer added that the sergeant in charge of the landing-stage was now awaiting trial. Suddenly those on the ship had noticed that the plank was giving underneath. They had shouted; Burke, apparently confused, had stepped forward, putting all his weight just over the crack and had completed the mischief, falling in between the steamer and the wharf and striking his head against the keel. Mansur Effendi, well known as one of the best swimmers in his native town of Benha, had promptly dived under the steamer, grasped the sinking officer, and aided by the soldiers dragged him on to the bank farther down stream.

It had been a gallant rescue, for the flooded river was sweeping north with tremendous force, and none but the strongest of swimmers could have withstood its current. Mansur, feeling a proprietary interest in the man whom he had saved, and not unmoved perhaps by this great obligation conferred upon a high official, had watched with the doctor, and between them, after unremitting care, both night and day, they had tided him through the severe concussion and the attack of fever that had followed. Old Billal, too, sent back by Purvis Bey a week later, had been unwearied in his watching and care, and now all was well. As for the conspiracy, Burke had quite lost faith in it. Mansur had proved himself a good man and true. So had the doctor.

A letter from Purvis, sent by Billal, brought the news that the rumour about India had resulted from a paragraph in that highly readable paper, 'El Lewa,' an ornament of the

Egyptian press that sometimes finds its way into the Sudan. Purvis had been told at once by his Sudanese officers, and had given the report the lie and calmed their apprehensions. All that remained for clearing up was that wire from the Intelligence, and Burke was momentarily expecting light on this subject, as the long-awaited post-boat had just arrived and the letters were even now being sorted. In a few moments Burke's mail was brought in by the postal orderly. Discarding even his home letters in his eagerness to see what Chesterfield-Smith had to say, he picked up an official envelope marked "Strictly Confidential," opened it only to find a second labelled "Secret," and finally took out the letter itself. It ran as follows:—

"DEAR BURKE,—I gather from your reply to my cipher telegram that you have had no anxiety about the loyalty of your staff at Abu Zait. This is merely to say that we have since found out that the information leading to the warning sent you was quite unreliable. A clerk, dismissed from Government service as a result of accusations brought against him by some of his fellow employees, came to the Sirdar with a very complete account of a plot against the Government, which he substantiated with a number of documents, since proved to be forgeries. His story implicated many Egyptian officials, among them being Mansur Effendi and Ahmed Hamdi in your district. Pending inquiry it was thought prudent to put you on your guard, and similar telegrams were sent to several other British officers in out-stations.

"I may tell you confidentially that, with the single exception of yourself, all of them found reason to suspect the officers mentioned to them, and their suspicions have since proved groundless. I am permitted to tell you that your confidence in your officers has been much appreciated by the Sirdar, who considers that it points to a very satisfactory co-operation between you and them. You will be pleased to hear that he has selected you for the post of Senior Inspector in Kassala Province, and your promotion appears in this week's 'Gazette.' Allow me to be the first to congratulate you, and believe me, yours very sincerely,

"R. CHESTERFIELD-SMITH."

The letter dropped from Burke's fingers. He felt confused and weak, inclined to titter in the helpless way that comes during convalescence. A step sounded on the threshold, and Mansur, his face wreathed in obsequious smiles and a copy of the 'Gazette' in his hand, hastened forward.

"Saatle Bey!" he cried, "Inshallah ashoofak Basha badein!" "Please God, I may see you a Pasha before long!"

S. LYLE.

THE WIFE OF BENEDICT ARNOLD.

BY MRS ANDREW LANG.

ENGLISH people are frequently reproached by their Scottish friends with ignorance of and indifference to their own family history. Very probably I should have fallen under the same condemnation but for the thrilling discovery made in my childhood that two of the regicides, Mayne and Harrison, were to be numbered amongst my direct ancestors. The fact inspired me with some awe but no great indignation, Stuart partisanship only being awakened in me under stress of opposition; and I was far more interested in the tale told me a few years later of the wooing of Abby Willing, my grandmother's first cousin, by Louis Philippe in 1797. This was romance indeed, and from that day I felt a sort of personal property in the French crown (then worn by Napoleon III.), regardless of the circumstance that the sturdy good sense of Thomas Willing turned a deaf ear to the royal suitor. "No, sir! Poor and an exile, you are no fit match for my daughter; and were you to succeed to the throne of France, *she* would be no fit match for *you*."

From this position nothing would move Thomas. Indeed, how was it possible for any man to give the lie to so neatly turned a peroration? Yet my old aunts loved to tell me that when fifty years later Louis Philippe fled to England with his wife and daughter, it was a matter of common talk, amongst many who saw the exiled Queen, that Marie Amélie closely resembled the pictures taken in her girlhood of Abby Willing.

Still, even the episode of Louis Philippe paled in fascination before the dark tragedy of Benedict Arnold, familiar to me in the pages of Mrs Markham; for was not his wife, Peggy Shippen, a cousin of my own, although as I was English she seemed more remote than she would have done to a child on the other side of the Border. The Shippens, had I known it, figured in history long before Peggy's time, and were cultivated, academic, perhaps narrow-minded Tories. Peggy's own ancestor, Edward Shippen, went over to Boston in 1688, shortly before William of Orange landed at Torbay, but he very soon moved to Philadelphia, where the family established themselves. Edward turned Quaker, grew rich, and ultimately was elected the first Mayor of his adopted town. Edward's nephew William remained in England and entered Parliament in 1707: from 1713 till his death in 1743 he represented the borough of Newton in Lancashire, and speedily earned the respect (though not the

imitation) of the House by his persistent refusal of bribes of any description. If we remember the almost universal practice of the age he lived in, when sinecures were considered the perquisite or the price of influence exerted by the dominant party, and the men who refused them could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand, it was no light praise to win the testimony of Walpole that "he would not say who was corrupted, but he would say who was *not* corruptible, and that man was Shippen." Political enemies though they were, the two mutually respected each other. "Robin and I are two honest men," Shippen once remarked. "He is for King George and I am for King James, but those men with long cravats only desire places either under King George or under King James." Yet Walpole had not always been so entirely for King George but that a few letters had passed between him and King James. So Shippen — "Downright Shippen," as Pope calls him— followed the example of Sir Thomas More, and declined "to pin his conscience to another man's back," and spoke out boldly when he beheld abuses that needed reforming. In 1718 he criticised the attitude of the King towards his kingdom — and towards his Electorate — and was sent to the Tower for his free speech, declining while in prison a "gift" of £1000 offered him by the Prince of Wales. This "gift" was most likely prompted more by the Prince's love of opposition to his father than by approval of the sentiments uttered by Shippen.

Coxe gives an interesting account of Shippen's conduct respecting the motion made in Parliament in 1740 for turning out Sir Robert Walpole. The "incorruptible" member for Newton seems to have secured for himself adherents sufficient in number to be of importance in debate, and on their support he could count. On this occasion he probably discarded the glove which it was his custom to hold before his mouth, veiling his utterance, and when he rose from his seat to speak on the question, delivered his views with the energy and spirit too often drowned in the glove.

"He looked," he said, "on the motion as only a scheme for turning out one Minister and bringing in another, and as his conduct in Parliament had always been regulated with a view to the good of his country, it was quite indifferent to him who was in and who was out, and he would give himself no further concern on the question." Then he withdrew, followed by thirty-four friends and much abuse.

The secession of Shippen gave rise to much speculation, and the explanation was not furnished for some time. When it did appear it was this. Shippen the Jacobite had been a friend of Atterbury, with whom he had corresponded during the short time that rooms had been given to the Member for Newton at Holland House. He was also the friend

of a conspirator in one of the perpetual plots to bring back as James III. the exiled son of James II. The plot was discovered, and Shippen, who was not an active party to it, had gone to Walpole and implored the Minister to save this man, whose name we do not know. Sir Robert exerted his power and then sent for Shippen, and, in a speech quoted by Coxe, told the Jacobite that his friend was safe, but in return for his safety he, Walpole, had a request to make.

"I will not ask you," he said, "to vote with the Government, for I could not expect it, but if ever a question should be brought forward in the House personally affecting me, I hope you may remember the favour I have done you."

Socially, too, Shippen seems to have been a *persona grata*, and his wife, the co-heiress of Sir Richard Stote of Northumberland, with £70,000 of her own, was much sought after by Queen Caroline. But Mrs Shippen was in her way as incorruptible as her husband in his. She did not care for Courts or fine people, and to the surprise of all her country and not a few of her town friends, preferred to live her own life, and rejected the Queen's advances with all the firm civility at her command.

Such were the English Shippens, who have now died out, and it is time to turn to the American branch, which is still flourishing. Peggy's father, Edward Shippen, had married the granddaughter of Charles Willing, one of a family which, like the Shippens, had settled in Philadelphia. Edward Shippen's mother-in-law, Anne Willing, is of some interest also, from the fact that her husband was Tench Francis, the cousin of "Junius"—if indeed the gay and charming Sir Philip Francis was the author of the scurrilous Letters. We know nothing of her personally, and there is very little mention made of the Willing connection in the correspondence of Peggy with her father, so it is possible that though near of kin they were less than kind,—or the two families may have differed in politics. For in the days when Peggy was eighteen—that is in the year 1778—Philadelphia was a very gay town, and most of the fashionable people took the side of the British troops quartered there. The most important city of America, its inhabitants were celebrated for their riches and their cultivated minds, as well as for the charm and grace of their women, and among these Peggy and her sisters Molly and Sally and Betty held the first place. The young English officers were frequently in and out of the house, and the most constant visitor of all was Major André. Which of the girls was the attraction? was a question whispered between their elders as they saw the conspicuous position assigned to the Major in all the revels which, strange to say in such a Royalist community, grew faster and more furious in proportion as the American

successes became more pronounced. The merry-making was at any rate the Swan Song of the British rule. On May 19 the sad news arrived that the English troops were to evacuate Philadelphia and the town was to be placed under the command of General Benedict Arnold, who had been nominated Military Governor. Consternation was painted on every female countenance. A wonderful soldier, of course! was it not he who had saved Fort Stanwix and practically gained the second battle of Saratoga, where one of his legs had been broken so badly? Every one knew that Washington looked on him as his right hand and inferior in military skill to nobody, but he was reported to be hard and stern—a lover of camps rather than of ballrooms. And the faces of the young ladies fell anew and life seemed barren till some one—perhaps it was André—suggested how delightful it would be to get up a tournament in honour of Sir William Howe, the English general, the day before the British troops marched out of the town. This proposal entirely changed the complexion of matters, and future partings were forgotten in the bustle of discussion over characters and clothes. "Who am I to be?" "What am I to wear?" resounded on all sides, but finally out of the confusion two or three facts emerged clearly. First, that the entertainment was to be known as the "Mischienza." Second, that André was to be the leader. Third, that his troop of actors was to be divided into two. Fourth, that the two sides were to be called respectively The Burning Mountain and The Blended Rose. Fifth, and most important of all—each knight was to have a device, a motto, and a LADY.

These preliminaries being settled, the arrangements went on apace. André headed the knights of The Blended Rose (it sounds like a perfume), who rode grey horses. His partner was, however, neither of the Shippen sisters but Miss Chew, with the motto "No Rival," and his device two gamecocks fighting. Molly Shippen's partner was Lieutenant Sloper, also a Blended Rose, and Peggy's, one of the knights of The Burning Mountain, young Wynyard (was he the Wynyard of the ghost story?), who bestrode a strong black horse and wore a bay-leaf on his helmet. We are not told the name of the victor in the combats, or if there were many casualties; at any rate these cannot have been serious, for the tournament was followed by a ball, and the day's amusements closed with fireworks. It was a splendid wind-up to a gay season, and it was also the wind-up, though she did not know it, of Peggy's happy girlhood. The next morning the British marched out, and Arnold took up his abode in the mansion which Howe had occupied.

Like Peggy herself, Benedict Arnold came of a good English

stock, and the family had left Dorsetshire to settle in the State of Connecticut. They prospered in various ways and became notable people, Benedict's great-grandfather being Governor of Rhode Island. From a boy Benedict had been difficult to manage — daring, resourceful, undisciplined; and the scoldings and punishments which no Pilgrim Fathers spared their children had only the result of making him sulky and resentful. Yet unsatisfactory though he might be as a son, his strong personality impressed all with whom he came in contact, and tales of his adventures and escapes were passed in awestruck whispers from one of his schoolfellows to another. The future conquerors of the British army obeyed him like lambs, and where he led they followed. Had he not one day dragged a cannon to the common at New Haven in the desire to celebrate a victory gained by the English over the French, placed it on end, filled it with powder, and then thrust a lighted stick down its mouth? Was there any other boy in Connecticut brave enough to risk his life like that? And he would have lost it too, had he not jumped back just in time to avoid receiving the whole charge in his face! Then, did not everybody know that whenever his mother sent him to the mill with corn to be ground, he would catch hold of one of the spokes of the wheel and be carried round with it? Any one else would have had his legs broken or been drowned, but Benedict was so quick and clever that he never came to harm. And Benedict, who loved praise, though he would have died sooner than admit it, knew what they felt and was moved to fresh deeds of rashness and daring.

By the time he was fifteen he grew tired of being at home, where his father carried on the business of a cooper, owning at the same time several ships which traded with the West Indies. Like other boys he longed to see the world, and ran away to join the English army which was then fighting the French in Canada. But his father had other views for his son, whom he wished to be his successor in business, and to Benedict's intense disgust he was sent back to New Haven. Still, the military instincts within him were not to be stifled so easily: for the second time he fled, and fought at Ticonderoga and at Quebec, where one of his legs was broken. Soon afterwards we find him in New Haven combining the trades of bookseller and druggist with those of a West Indian merchant, and it was said — and we may readily believe — of a smuggler. At twenty-six he married, and after eight years his wife died, leaving his sister Hannah to look after the three little boys.

Now any one who has read the colonial memoirs of that date will have noted the extraordinary thirst on the part of American men after matrimony. Hardly was one wife

dead than they set about getting another, and it was no uncommon thing to find an elderly gentleman who had buried four if not five wives—as many of them as possible being widows. Benedict Arnold had caught the prevailing fever, and he had not been a widower much more than a year when he made advances to the "heavenly Miss Deblois," whom he met at Boston. Through the wife of General Knox he conveyed to the young lady "a trunk of gowns," a gift which seems to take a good deal for granted. Such apparently was the opinion of Miss Deblois, for on receipt of the letter accompanying the trunk, she promptly returned a refusal—and let us hope, the gowns also. Another eighteen months went by, and as we have seen, America was ringing with the exploits of Arnold, who was now fighting, not for England, but against her. In the second battle of Saratoga (Oct. 7, 1777) he was so badly wounded that it was necessary to carry him off the field into the hospital at Albany, but in spite of fearful and prolonged sufferings, as soon as he could be moved he started for Connecticut, and in the spring of 1778 joined Washington at Valley Forge. The General, who set the highest value on his skill in tactics as well as on his almost animal courage, was anxious to give him an important post in the army, but as Arnold's wound prevented his mounting a horse, the only alternative at present was to make him Military Governor of Philadelphia. Had he not been wounded, and had Washington been able to carry out his intentions, Benedict Arnold's memory would this day have been venerated in America with those of Hamilton, Grant, and Lincoln; but then, he might never have met Peggy.

Hardship, pain, and it must be added, over-weening self-esteem and an impossible temper, had made this man of thirty-six old before his time. Yet to Peggy, herself only eighteen, he was young enough to fall in love with. "There can be no doubt," writes one of her kinsmen, "that the imagination of Miss Shippen was excited and her heart captivated by the oft-repeated stories of his gallant deeds, his feats of brilliant courage and traits of generosity and kindness, such as his contributions towards the education of the children of General Warren." And this was the side he kept turned to Peggy to the end of his life.

It was in May that they met, and in September he spoke to her father, adding that he did not want a fortune with Peggy, as he had plenty of money for both. "Our difference in political sentiments will, I hope, be no bar to my happiness," he concluded, and the remark leads us to infer that Mr Shippen had not been *very* discouraging, though he certainly did not return any positive answer. Doubtless he felt flattered, as any man would, at his young daughter being sought in marriage by one of

the foremost men of his time and country, and it would be interesting to know the reasons for his hesitation. Could he have detected—it is very possible—some of the flaws in Arnold's character which were of a nature to wreck the peace of those who trusted in him, and to nullify all his good qualities? His position as Military Governor of the city gave ample scope for the indulgence of his love of ostentation, of his desire, manifest from boyhood, to *épater* the rest of his world, the vanity and impatience of correction that led him to reject the advice of those more experienced than himself in matters of which he could know nothing, the tendency to brood over fancied slights till they became injuries—these faults, if noticed by the shrewd lawyer, were calculated to give Peggy's father pause, and determine on delay before allowing the engagement.

Christmas sees him still undecided. "All is jollity and mirth," he writes on December 21, 1778, on the occasion of the wedding of one of his girls. "My youngest daughter is much solicited by a certain general on the same subject. Whether this takes place or not depends on circumstances. If it should, it will not be till spring." Perhaps the marriage festivities proved the last straw to Peggy, and her pleadings with her father may at length have won the day. We know at least that three months after Mr Shippen had written the letter quoted above, Arnold had bought Mount Pleasant, a charming estate situated on a bluff overlooking the Schuylkill, with a park full of old oaks and sycamores, and in May he and Peggy were married.

"Married in May, repent for aye,"

says the Scottish proverb. But Peggy never repented.

There were great doings in the Governor's house during that summer of 1779, and even while enjoying the balls and dinners to their utmost, the Philadelphian citizens shook their heads over the extravagance displayed by the Governor. No entertainments that Sir William Howe had given were half so splendid as those organised by Arnold. He was no administrator either, and declined to take advice from those who had managed the affairs of the city, while he was in his element planning surprises or leading attacks. No one accused him of dishonesty or of appropriating public funds to his private uses, but his folly and imprudence soon gave his enemies (many of them jealous of his success) a handle. A court-martial was ordered, to the grief of Washington, whose faith in his friend was unshaken, and though he was powerless to stop it altogether, he contrived on one pretext or another to postpone it till December 1779.

The charges brought were for the most part trivial in the extreme, and in the end Arnold was reported to have exceeded his powers as Governor, though

acquitted of all dishonour. But what hurt his vanity most was the necessary and formal endorsement of the censure by Washington, and this Arnold never forgave. Even the offer (which followed immediately) of the command of the left wing of the army could not soothe his feelings, and the proposal was coldly and haughtily declined.

Yet a true patriot would have seized eagerly the chance afforded him. The American army in 1780 was at a low ebb, as is stated by Arnold himself. Thirty thousand men were urgently needed, and only twelve thousand, ill-clad, ill-fed, and ill-paid, were to be got. Arnold with his energy, his prestige, and his military skill, would have drawn his fellow-countrymen to his standard, and might have speedily put an end to the war. Washington's offer marked the parting of the ways for Arnold, and in the light of it we remember his own words to Peggy when, eighteen years later, the English Government refused to let him expose his life in the plague-stricken West Indies: "They will not give me a chance of dying a soldier's death."

All through that spring of 1780 Arnold brooded over his grievances, and not even the birth of Peggy's first baby could divert his thoughts for more than a moment. Gradually his enmity to Washington and the rest took on itself the guise of wishing, for the good of his country, that the English rule should be restored, and from this the step was easy to open communications—communications, of course, of the most vague and indefinite sort—with the British commander. "The future is secure," he writes to Peggy, and so it was: the future of remorse and self-contempt which never fails to reward even the most successful treachery. Arnold's strategic eye told him at once what to do. West Point, the chief military post and largest arsenal on the Hudson, must be in his hands as a base for further operations. Washington was applied to, and at once the command of West Point, which Arnold desired, was conferred on him. In August he went there, followed by the baby and Peggy. She would have been quite happy but for the constant visits of one Joshua Smith, who made himself hated by the garrison from his incessant abuse of all things American; and why Arnold kept him there she was at a loss to understand.

The story of the treason and its discovery is too well known to need more than the briefest sketch here: how André, the go-between, disobeyed the orders of the British general, and carrying in his stockings the papers that betrayed them both, was arrested on his way from an interview with Arnold; and how the news was conveyed next morning to West Point in a letter to the General from Colonel Jameson, who was quite unsuspicious of Arnold's complicity. The traitor was sitting at break-

fast in company with several young officers when the letter was handed to him. He read it through, and then finished what he had been saying, without any of the party, except Peggy, detecting that he was disturbed. "Well, I have some important business to see to," he observed, rising quietly from the table, and when outside the door he called to Peggy that he wanted her. Drawing her into another room, he told in a few words the tale of his treachery, which hardly penetrated her dazed mind, so impossible did it seem in the man she believed him to be. Even his closing words, "I must fly instantly! My life depends on my reaching the British lines without detection," at the moment conveyed to her nothing more than some physical danger, and with a shriek she fell fainting at his feet. He placed her on the bed, and then went calmly down to his barge, and was safe on board His Majesty's ship *Vulture* and on the way to join Sir Henry Clinton before it was known he had left the house. But his first thought as the vessel sailed down the river was for his wife, and he wrote instantly to Washington to tell him that Peggy was totally ignorant of the plot, and to beg that she might be permitted either to join him in New York or to go to her father in Philadelphia. No higher compliment was ever paid to Washington's honour and kindness of heart than the fact that the man who had just planned the blackest of crimes could thus turn to him in perfect confidence; and Arnold knew his friend, and did not trust him in vain. Washington lost no time in letting Peggy know her husband was out of danger, though of course, he added, it was his duty to leave no stone unturned to arrest him. Thus for the time she was able to breathe again, and to make up her mind what was best for her to do. She was very young, and as yet had not known sorrow, but she was not the kind of woman who thinks wrong is right because her husband is the criminal, or who fails to grasp to the full the ruin he has wrought.

Never has there been a greater outburst of horror and rage than that which shook the whole American nation when the details of Arnold's treachery came to light. Effigies of him were burnt everywhere, and a price of £5000 was set on his head. Twenty-three years later old Shippen writes that Arnold's daughter "might find it awkward if she visited America," and that her little brother could not go to school there, "as the boys would tease him." Yet for the traitor's wife no one felt anything but the deepest sympathy, and Alexander Hamilton in especial did everything possible to spare her suffering. Washington's laughing remark to Lafayette was still true: "Ah, Marquis, you young men are all in love with Mrs Arnold."

Henceforth the first object of Peggy's life was to cover as

far as she could her husband's dishonour. It must have been bitter indeed to be forced to return to Philadelphia, where she had reigned as a little queen, while she was still quivering from the staggering blow, but there was nowhere else for her to go, and it was not in her nature to make a fuss over the inevitable. Yet, as soon as she could she went by Arnold's wish to New York, where James, her second son, was born in August 1781. Meanwhile her husband was fighting in the English ranks against his countrymen, and fighting with all the zeal and skill that were part of his character. "He was ever a fighter," and it was his instincts far more than his desperate position which caused him even now to be foremost in the field as well as in the council. The British knew his value, and he was made much of, which to some degree soothed the shame he could not but feel; and when, in December 1781, the war being practically over, he went to England with Peggy and the two babies in the same ship as Lord Cornwallis, he received a warm welcome from the King and Queen. From the King and Queen—but not from society. It was to no purpose that he was often at Court and was frequently accorded private audiences by George III.; that Queen Charlotte settled a pension of £500 a-year on Peggy with £100 a-year for each of the children. Society from the first steadily declined the company of General Arnold. There could be no possible doubt on the matter, and Arnold sought refuge from his thoughts and employed his enforced leisure in commercial enterprises for which he was totally unfitted, and as the years went on passed more and more time in the West Indies and Canada, where two of his sons by his first wife finally settled after leaving the British army. He had always been a muddler as regards money, and of a fatal optimism concerning financial schemes, with the result that he was perpetually in debt, and without the royal bounty Peggy would have been badly off indeed. As it was, her letters to her father in these years show her struggling to master the details of her situation and seeking his advice as to the best way of coping with it. Mount Pleasant is to be sold, as Arnold thinks (or says he thinks) that "American lands are falling in value, and it is more heavily mortgaged than he supposed." It is characteristic of Arnold not to be aware of the extent of the mortgages on his own property. Peggy moves from one house to another—from Bryanston Street to Holles Street, or to Mortimer Street, as she finds that rents are high or low, trying to be cheerful for her children's sake, and to keep up the spirits of Arnold when he was at home, which must have been like pouring water into a sieve, so gloomy and melancholy was he. Yet she probably would not have had him otherwise; at anyrate, the gloom was a sign of grace and remorse for

the deed that neither of them could ever forget. By March 1786, the year that saw the birth of her daughter Sophia, the strain had proved almost too great for her, and for once she lets herself go and pours out her heart to her father.

"I assure you, my dear papa, I find it necessary to summon all my philosophy to my aid. Separated from and anxious for the fate of the best of husbands; torn from almost everybody that is dear to me; harassed with a troublesome and expensive lawsuit, having all the general's business to transact, and feeling that I am in a strange country without a creature near me that is really interested in my fate, you will not wonder if I am unhappy. But I will not distress you with my unavailing complaints, which I seldom suffer to engross my pen or tongue, but deprived of all domestic society, I have too much time to indulge them." Poor girl! she was now only twenty-six, but how distant must have seemed the days of the Mischienza and the frolics of her roystering brothers, of whose manners a young Philadelphian lady wrote indignantly to a friend, "Mr Shippen would be tolerable if he were not so fond," adding that even in your bedroom you were not safe from him and his companions, as he would burst in "and kiss you twenty times," leaving your cap and handkerchief in such a condition that you really were not presentable!

Melancholy and soured though he was, Arnold was not so self-absorbed as to be blind to all his wife had to bear, and urges her to accept her father's invitation to go back to Philadelphia on a visit. Of course his frequent absences made this easier for her, and when once in America she must have stayed some time, and George, her third son, was born in St John's, New Brunswick, in 1787. To judge by a letter she writes to her sister in July 1790, the change had been very good for her, and some of the old Peggy had come back. After speaking of the pain of parting from those at home, she goes on to say: "Your anecdotes of my friends and acquaintances afford me great amusement, and I feel interested in all their little love-scenes. I am convinced that Mrs A. will never think seriously of Mr Marsden, though she may carry on a little flirtation with him. The all-conquering Miss A. had better accept of Mr Phillips, as I believe he has one of the best fortunes in New York, and as I have heard it suspected that ambition is her reigning passion, she will probably sacrifice her love to it." These lines might almost have come from the pen of a little girl then living in Hampshire whose name was Jane Austen.

It was in 1792 that once again Benedict Arnold had *le beau rôle*, and Peggy was not slow to make the most of it. On June 26 she writes to her father from Holles Street, Cavendish Square, with an account of the matter.

"The anxiety which my last letter must have occasioned, as I there mentioned the probability of a duel taking place between the Earl of Lauderdale and General Arnold, I am happy to relieve, as the affair is settled most honourably for the General, and his conduct on the occasion has given him great applause. . . . Lord L., in an attack on the Duke of Richmond, is said to have used the following expressions: 'That he did not know of any instance of political apostacy equal to the Duke of Richmond's except General Arnold's,' and that as 'the intended encampment was designed to overawe the kingdom, and the Metropolis in particular, and prevent a reform in the Parliament, the Duke of Richmond was the most proper person to command it, General Arnold being struck off the list.'"

This was plain speaking indeed, and Arnold instantly demanded an apology. In reply, Lauderdale denied using the last expression, and made what *he* described as an "apology" for the first charge, to the effect that his only reason for bringing in Arnold's name was because he could think of no one who would illustrate his meaning so well. This was hardly likely to throw oil on the waters, and Arnold drew up a form which Lauderdale was to sign, the alternative being a duel. Lauderdale returned the form blank, and Lord Hawke, the Arnolds' "particular friend," made all the necessary arrangements for the meeting, to take place at Kilburn Wells the following Sunday. Hawke was to be Arnold's second, and Charles James Fox was to be Lauderdale's,—a somewhat strange choice, seeing that Richmond, the *casus belli*, was a connection of Fox. The weapons fixed on were pistols, and the two principals were to fire simultaneously; but Arnold's ball missed, and Lauderdale did not fire at all, alleging, when the seconds perceived the fact, that he really had not the least ill-feeling towards Arnold, and that he absolutely declined to fire again, but that Arnold might do so. It must be allowed that Lauderdale, though undoubtedly brave, was undeniably wanting in tact, and Arnold, beckoning to Fox, desired him to inform the Earl that if he did not either apologise or fire again, he (Arnold) would be obliged to insult him in such a manner that he would be forced to fight. In the end, and after many consultations between the seconds, Lauderdale consented to repeat that he was sorry for his words, "and had no intention of aspersing Arnold's character." If his remark to the House had not been "aspersion," we should like to know what aspersion is; but Arnold saw he would get no more and accepted the apology. Lauderdale, says Peggy, "expressed great concern at finding I had been made unhappy, and begged leave to wait upon me to make an apology." (Did he ever come, we wonder, and was Peggy satisfied with a re-

petition of the "apology" he had made Arnold?) "But what I suffered for near a week cannot be described. The suppression of my feelings lest I should unman the General almost proved too much for me, and for some hours my reason was despaired off." But for the Arnolds the social result of the duel was distinctly profitable, as Peggy goes on to tell us that "many of the first families in the kingdom called on the General," and finishes her account with the naïve observation that she was not "displeased at the great commendations bestowed on her own conduct on this trying occasion."

William, Peggy's youngest child, was born in June 1794, and three months earlier Arnold had started on one of his business excursions for the island of Guadaloupe. He got no farther than Falmouth, as apparently the ship which was to carry him to the West Indies either delayed sailing or was obliged to put in for repairs. To the inn where he lodged while waiting to put to sea came Talleyrand, on his way to America, for England was tired of him and France he had made too hot to hold him. The ex-bishop soon fell into conversation with the landlord, who, anxious to do honour to his house in the eyes of this distinguished stranger, boasted of the presence of an American general whose name, however, he did not know. The man contrived to effect a meeting between his temporary guests, but at first it did not seem likely to be a success. According to M. Bernard de Lacombe ('La Vie Privée de Talleyrand'), the American answered the questions put to him by Talleyrand curtly and evasively. The diplomatist ignored his reluctance, and before they parted requested the unknown man with the sad face and the tired eyes to give him some introductions to people who might be useful to him in the States.

"No!" burst forth the stranger, with a gesture of despair. "That I cannot do! I am perhaps the only American who cannot give you letters to his own country. The ties which bound me to it are broken: I can never go back. I am Benedict Arnold." And with bent head the unhappy man quitted the room.

The description is picturesque but perhaps highly coloured, for Isaac Arnold in his kinsman's biography expressly states that Talleyrand was struck with Arnold's intelligence and knowledge of public men, and that they were much pleased with each other.

During all this time Peggy's correspondence with her father continues briskly, and deals largely with schemes for placing her own money to the best advantage. From his letters we gather that the business relations between England and America were now on a perfectly friendly footing, and Mr Shippen is much pleased to hear that "Mr Gay has had a favourable reception at your

Court" (1794). The disturbances abroad frequently render the transmission of bills a matter of difficulty, and he thinks it natural and wise that "so many people in England wish to invest money in America where it would be safe." He might have added, "and where the interest is good," for he makes constant mention of securing 7½ or 8 per cent, while Peggy on her side writes (1796) that "prices in London have so gone up that £1000 is now not equal to £600," and "she is sick of the struggle to keep up appearances." Four years later they are higher still,—"Enormous," she calls it,—"meat 1s., bread 4d., butter 1s. 3d."; and thankful indeed must she have been when her father's appointment as Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, with a salary of £1000 a-year, enabled him to help her and her children. George III., too, gave them very substantial aid when in 1798 he granted Arnold 13,000 acres of land in Canada, "in return for his brilliant services during the war."

But in spite of these benefits and her good management, Peggy was always in straits for money, and her incessant anxieties were breaking her health and weighing her down. "Nothing can be so gloomy as the present state of our public affairs," she writes. "I look forward to a revolution in this country and a consequent deprivation of our support from Government," and Mr Shippen's news of the future of England are no more sanguine than hers. "We have had such alarming accounts respecting the intended invasion and probable success of the all-powerful Frenchmen against your devoted country," he says in a letter dated July 1, 1798, "that my feelings regarding you have been all alive;" and adds that the alarm felt in England was echoed in America. "Our situation here is indeed critical. We have mortally offended the Conquerors of the World by making a treaty with England without his leave." "The Conquerors of the World": yet Marengo was nearly two years distant!

In the midst of these melancholy forebodings it is pleasant to note that Peggy's troubles have not entirely obscured her interest in small things, which as a girl had been specially vivid. "I was yesterday gratified by the sight of the cup and cover and stand that was given to the famous M.P. of our name in the reign of George I.," she tells her father; and in spite of her poverty she longs to buy it from the silversmith at whose shop it had been exhibited, and to send it as a present to Mr Shippen, but unluckily it was not for sale. The cup and cover were of silver gilt, and weighed 160 oz. On it was an inscription: "From the Duke of Buckingham and Normandy [?] to the worthy Mr Shippen." This must have been the same Duke of Buckingham who alludes in his poem, "On the Election of a

Poet Laureate," to the ill-success of Downright Shippen's own efforts in verse—

"To Shippen, Apollo was cold with respect,
But said in a greater assembly he shined,
As places were things he had ever declined."

Does the cup still exist? And if so, who has it? And how, oh how! did Buckingham obtain the title of Duke of Normandy?

Whatever the pain suffered silently by Peggy in regard to her husband and her finances, her children as well as her stepsons (of whom she was very fond) caused her nothing but pride and happiness. Edward, her eldest boy, went out to India in 1799 and became a distinguished civilian. He had inherited none of his father's shiftlessness, and managed his salary so well that at the age of twenty-two he was able to undertake entirely his little brother William's education. James contrived to live on his pay—even when a lieutenant of Engineers; George was entered at the Royal Military College, which had lately been founded, and joined Edward in 1804, shortly before his mother's death. He was badly wounded in the Peninsular War, and was always high in the estimation of his commanders as a brave and skilful soldier. Descendants of George are still living, and one of Peggy's grandsons was killed before Sebastopol. Sophia, the only girl, ultimately went out to visit Edward in India, and while there made a good marriage. She was her mother's constant companion during her life, and some of Peggy's beauty and charm seems to have descended to her. Peggy needed all the comfort her children could give her during the dark days that were at hand, for in June 1801 there came an end to Arnold's sad existence. It was a bitter grief to Peggy, who had never ceased to love him and to shield him, and to "keep up appearances" in this as in other ways; while "his affection for her was unbounded," as she writes to her father, whom she may justly have suspected of feeling that Arnold had spoilt his daughter's life. She was silent as to her husband's faults, and, as far as we know, discussed with no one—unless, perhaps, with her father—the crime of the betrayal. What excuses Arnold may have made to her, and what she answered him, has never been told. To her children, we may be sure, she never uttered a word of blame about their father; yet somehow they learned the details of his fall, and the iron ate deep into their souls. At the storming of Surinam there was a forlorn hope to be led, and James at once applied to the Colonel for permission to lead it, saying that "he knew that his father was held to have failed in his duty, and he desired to do the best he could to redeem his name." His wish was granted and the position captured, but without the sacri-

fice of James's life: it was in Spain and not in South America that he was to die. During the five years that remained to his mother it was upon him she chiefly leaned. The debts left by Arnold were heavy, but Peggy's honesty would not suffer one to remain unpaid as long as she possessed a shilling. She had some thoughts of making a home in the country, but decides that "a small town is composed of card-playing, tattling old maids," and she will be better in town, much as she will feel the loss of a carriage — "not only in point of comfort, but of respectability." From this time her strength gradually failed her, and bulletins are sent across the Atlantic by her father's friend and relative Daniel Coxe, as Peggy could no longer write more than a few lines. In 1804 she, with Sophia and William, moved back into Gloucester Place, where at the end of December she passed quietly away, thankful to lay down her burdens. Even now she numbered only forty-four years, and for twenty-four of them had carried with her a mortal wound to her pride, to her self-respect, to her patriotism,—to everything indeed but her trust in her husband's love, which was hers to the end.

Vincit qui patitur.

THE UNFORTUNATE SAINT.

BY ST JOHN LUCAS.

THAT quaint old chronicler Gallinus Garrulus, whose long-lost treatise on the unpleasant private lives and glorious miracles of the holy men who dwelt in the Thebaïd has been discovered and edited by the erudite Doctor Schwätzer of Leipzig, tells us, in his mediocre Latin, many useful and edifying facts concerning a certain Alexander who flourished in the third century of our era, earned the universal hatred of the human race through no fault of his own but a lack of forethought, and was canonised by Innocent the First a year before Alaric and his barbarians sacked the Holy City. Alexander, who was fond of insisting that he was not descended from the heathen and dissipated monarch of that name, had originally followed the profession of a wandering tinker; tinkering, indeed, was hereditary in his family, and there is no doubt that he was either the grandson or great-grandson (Garrulus says grandson, but Schwätzer has ten pages of notes on the subject) of the celebrated coppersmith Alexander who annoyed Paul, and, as we all know, was delivered unto Satan by that irritated saint. In the course of his travels he went to Upper Egypt, where there was a considerable demand for his art, and one day by a most fortunate chance he entered a squalid village which was inhabited by a celibate congregation of very holy men. In this village he stayed, finding plenty of work, for the very holy men were gloriously aloof from the practical details of life, and therefore all their pots and pans were badly in need of repair.

In spite of the essentially mundane character of his work, Alexander himself had a decided inclination towards the saintly life, and after he had sojourned for a while in the village he decided that he would stay there always, adopting holiness as his profession, and occupying his leisure with looking after the kettles, cauldrons, and pots of the Elect. Unfortunately the holiest man of all in the village, whose name was Irenæus, was a strong believer in heredity. Irenæus was bad-tempered; even in that environment he had a famous reputation for personal uncleanliness, and his slumbers were disturbed almost nightly by the most remarkable visions. In the course of one of these the secret of Alexander's pedigree was revealed to him, and he decided at once that the tinker was a lewd fellow and quite unfit for decent society. He held a vestry meeting, and Alexander was informed that

as soon as all the pots and pans were mended he was to leave the village and return no more.

Alexander was seriously annoyed when he heard of the resolution passed by the vestry meeting, for he was conscious of becoming holier every day, and life in the village, with its combination of healthy labour and an ever-growing sense of righteousness, suited him very well. Therefore, in order to prolong his sojourn, he adopted the method of the Pagan Queen Penelope, at night secretly making apertures in the pans which he had cleverly mended by day. Meanwhile his holiness increased marvellously, and he began to see visions no less important than those of Irenæus himself. But when he told Irenæus concerning them, that great and malodorous man was extremely surly, and said that in his opinion they were caused either by indigestion or by a hereditary bad conscience. All too soon the pious fraud of Alexander was discovered: Irenæus detected him in the act of boring a large hole in a cistern, and next day at dawn the unfortunate Alexander was excommunicated and driven forth from the village with cursing and stripes.

He resumed his wandering life, but very soon his holiness and his visions became so enthralling that he found himself neglecting his trade, and after a while he resolved to renounce it altogether, and to devote the rest of his days to pious meditations and righteous exercises. Even when he had been staying in the village, certain small experiments which he had made were enough to convince him that he possessed miraculous power, and as soon as he got free from the baneful proximity of Irenæus (who was always trying to spoil with a miracle of his own any mighty work attempted by Alexander), he found that his power increased an hundred-fold. His enthusiasm likewise increased, and with it the desire for renown and the determination to rise superior to that sour saint in his own favourite art. Now the miracles of Alexander, according to the testimony of the truthful but illiterate Garrulus, were as follows.

It befell that on a certain day Alexander was crossing the desert, and paused to quench his thirst and enjoy the shade in a certain oasis not far from the great city Alexandria. While he rested, he became aware of the presence of a concourse of savage and naked men, who danced and shouted and displayed every symptom of intense felicity. Alexander approached them in order to find out the reason of their joy, and perceived that they were surrounding a large lion whose fore-paws were caught in a heavy wooden trap. The lion watched their unseemly gestures with calm disdain, and uttered no sound when their leader, a

Nubian with a gross body, threw a number of little, sharp spears at him. Alexander watched the scene for some time, and then, being of a pitiful nature, his heart was moved with compassion for the poor lion, and he announced to the naked men that he intended to release him. The naked men laughed, and some of them threw stones at him, but quite good-naturedly, and they continued to dance. Then Alexander exerted his miraculous powers to the utmost extent, and at last the heavy wooden trap opened and the lion came out of it, limping because his fore-paws were severely bruised. The naked men ran away shouting, with the exception of the Nubian, who fell when he started, sprained his ankle, and lay on the ground staring at the lion and showing all the whites of his eyes. The lion walked slowly and majestically towards Alexander, who imagined that the poor beast was grateful for his miracle, but in reality (Garrulus affirms) it was his intention to eat his holy benefactor. When, however, the lion had approached Alexander, he saw that the saint was obviously bony and stringy and presumably tough; therefore he turned to the Nubian and devoured a portion of him with manifest pleasure. Then he limped away into the desert and was seen no more, and as soon as he had gone the savage, naked men beat Alexander and cut him with knives and left him, thinking he was dead. And they put the remainder of the Nubian into a small portmanteau and departed.

It was more than a month before Alexander recovered from his wounds. That he did so at all was due to the watchful care of a holy hermit who lived near the oasis and heard the story of the miracle from the savage men. In spite of his private sufferings, Alexander was greatly delighted with the success which had attended his effort, and was burning to distinguish himself further. He instructed the holy hermit to inform Irenæus by pigeon-post of all that had happened, blessed him, and proceeded on his way.

Now when Alexander drew nigh to the opulent city Biterses, he found himself amongst a dark-skinned tribe who wore scarlet and silver turbans and drank the milk of mares, for the goat was to them an unclean animal. This people lived in a valley shut in on all sides by high hills, so that when they wished to go to the city Biterses on business, or to make any other journey, it was necessary for them first of all to cross one of the hills, and this, in inclement seasons, was a burden to them. Although they were pagans they were charitable folk, and treated Alexander with great kindness. Their women tried to induce him to drink mare's milk in large quantities in order that he might grow great-thewed like other men and no longer resemble a gnarled and withered tree, and

their men invited him to become one of their gods. To a person of his singular virtue such temptations were as nothing, but nevertheless he became very fond of the people in the valley, and was always trying to think of some miracle that would have a permanently useful result for them. At last, noticing the inconvenience which they suffered from being hemmed in on all sides by lofty hills, he decided that it would be an excellent thing if one of the hills was removed, and their commerce with the rest of the world thereby rendered easy.

For several days he toiled, nor even at night did he cease from exerting his miraculous power, and at last, on the evening of the fifth day, a dreadful groaning and rumbling was heard, and one of the hills began to move slowly away from its neighbours in the circle. Soon a huge gap full of boulders and yawning pits was revealed, and the hill moved steadily on. The people of the valley were so greatly delighted that, without permission, they unanimously elected Alexander their chief god. Alexander himself was highly elated at the success of his effort, and despatched a pigeon carrying an account of the miracle to Irenæus. But very soon his pride had a grievous fall, for he discovered that, though he was able to move the hill, he had not yet acquired sufficient power to stop it when once it was in motion. In spite of the most frantic efforts on the part of Alexander, the hill went majestically on across the plain, reached the great city Biterses by night, and crushed it as the foot of a giant crushes a colony of ants. Then the hill proceeded onward, and eventually disappeared into the sea, causing the highest tide ever reported on those shores and ruining the whole tunny-fishing trade for two years.

Alexander was highly gratified with the success of this miracle, though he felt sorry, from the strictly human point of view, for the people of Biterses, and got up a subscription in the district for the tunny-fishers. His fame was now immense; but as the survivors of the ruin of Biterses threatened to exterminate the dwellers in the valley if they harboured him any longer, he thought that it would be more humane to depart from the locality. He journeyed for three days, and on the evening of the third he perceived a small village surrounded by palm-trees. His recent vast success had not made him proud, and he resolved to enter the humble village and inquire if there was any scope in it for his powers.

He halted by the well in the middle of the little market-place, and whilst he was resting there two women came to draw water, one old, the other in the prime of life. He spoke to both of them, but only the old woman responded to his salutation. The young woman seemed to be quite unconscious of his presence. After a while

he spoke to her again, and the old woman explained that she had been deaf and dumb from birth, and that one of the villagers, being enthralled by her great beauty, had lately married her. Alexander was full of joy at finding a subject for his art so soon, and almost before the old woman had finished speaking he had cured the deafness of the young woman, and she began to talk like a little child. The old woman was amazed and tried to worship Alexander, but Alexander prevented her and went on his way, promising to return in a week to see if the cure was complete.

He spent the week in earnest conversation with a dropsical saint at El-gebi, and then returned to the village. As he entered the gate he heard sounds of lamentation, and presently he saw a funeral procession which escorted the body of a young man to the cemetery. He was about to restore the young man's life when it occurred to him to ask his name. The chief mourner answered him, and added that the young man had committed suicide. Alexander asked the reason for this rash and dreadful act, and the chief mourner beat his breast.

"It was our wont," he said, "to call him the Happiest on Earth; and of a truth he merited the title, for he married a wife who was beautiful and deaf and dumb. But on an evil day she met a sorcerer who gave her speech and hearing, and since that time she has talked and stormed and railed without ceasing. Wherefore we bear to an untimely grave the body of him who was called the Happiest on Earth."

Alexander, having heard the remarks of the chief mourner, walked thoughtfully away and neglected to restore life to the body of the young man. And as he went through the village, a stout man in white raiment followed him, and when they were come to a lonely place pulled his sleeve. And the stout man said to Alexander, "Without any doubt you are the famous sorcerer who healed the deaf-mute. Nay, deny it not, for the old woman who was present at the well has herself pointed you out to me."

Alexander said: "I am no sorcerer, but a worker of holy miracles."

"That," responded the stout man, "is neither here nor there. I am a physician, and my richest patient is on the point of death, whereby I suffer discredit and financial loss to boot. Therefore I am come to beg your assistance, for I am confident that you can heal him."

Alexander was reluctant to consent, for the worldly interests of the physician shocked him. But the physician importuned him so volubly that at length he was persuaded, and together they went to the bedside of the sick man.

They found him already in the article of death. His bed was surrounded by relatives and friends, who displayed fewer signs of grief than are

customary on such lamentable occasions. The physician went to the dying man and administered a strong potion, whilst Alexander held aloof and exerted his miraculous power. In a short time the sick man arose from his bed, stared at the relatives and friends, cursed them heartily, and demanded food and wine. The physician uttered a loud cry of joy, whereat the relatives and friends fell upon him and beat him severely. Some of them fell upon the sick man also, but he drove them away with mighty blows of his fist, and went out of the death-chamber. Then the physician, who was almost swooning with pain and fear, cried out that Alexander, and not he himself, was the author of the miracle; whereat they all with one accord turned upon Alexander and beat him and tore off his raiment and thrust him naked from the village. On the outskirts he met the funeral procession returning from the cemetery; and when the mourners saw him they also fell upon him and beat him, either for sport, or because his appearance offended their sense of decency.

After this Alexander departed into another country. He healed his wounds with the help of an ointment which he made from various herbs; for though his faith was very great he found that it was insufficient to cure the ailments and bruises of his own body. Now it happened that the country into which he passed was ruled over by a king who was mad, and spent all his days in playing the flute, and sailing little boats made of paper, and painting strange pictures on whitened walls. His court was filled with musicians, poets, sculptors, and other children of the Devil, and he lived with them in a beautiful garden full of orange groves and fountains, leaving the affairs of the state entirely in the hands of his Ministers. The Ministers were honest and the country flourished exceedingly, so that the people were contented and loved their king, who was kind though very mad.

When Alexander arrived in the country he found that no one knew his name, and that the people were so prosperous and healthy that there really seemed to be no scope for his art. He informed them that he was a worker of miracles, but they merely laughed and replied that he was welcome, but would have been more welcome if he had been a grand sculptor or a cunning flute-player. This offended Alexander, and he attempted to perform some small miracles at once; but because his pride was injured and his temper bad they were failures, and therefore the people looked upon him as a harmless but slightly tedious lunatic, and the little children made a song about him, in which the name Alexander rhymed with gander. At least, it would have done so if the song had been in the English tongue. The holy saint was exceedingly irritated

when he found that no one would take him seriously, and he resolved to work a miracle of the most convincing and dramatic kind. He meditated for many days, and then he decided that nothing could be more salutary to the country or more glorious to himself than to heal the poor king of his madness.

Even to one of his extreme holiness the task was difficult, for the king's strange malady was of many years' standing. Alexander toiled for several weeks without any apparent result, and then at last the king gave up playing the flute and took to hunting. He compelled the great sculptors and musicians who thronged his court to share his new pleasure; and they, being unused to such a life, were inept, and fell off their horses. The philosophers from Greece were especially ridiculous. After a while the king became angry with them, and dismissed them from his service, and captains and politicians took their places. The king became quite sane, and began to take a keen interest in the affairs of his country, even to the extent of hanging and imprisoning Ministers who seemed to him to be stupid. He developed a great enthusiasm for the art of war; ordained that there should be universal military service throughout the land, and attacked and conquered a neighbouring country, treating the vanquished with intense severity. His other neighbours, fearing that he would conquer them one by one, proclaimed an alliance against him; there was a long and sanguinary war in which thousands of lives were lost, hundreds of homes left desolate, and the peaceful face of the country was scarred and blackened. At the end of it all the land became a vassal state, the survivors were overwhelmed with taxes, and the king was chained in a dungeon for the remainder of his life. All the people sighed for the pleasant days when they had prospered under the rule of a madman, and execrated the name of Alexander, who, at the outset, had unfortunately made public the part which he played in the affair. It was with difficulty that he escaped their vengeance.

Then a terrible thing happened to Alexander. Instead of the nightly consolation of beatific visions he was haunted continually by the cries of wounded men, of homeless women and children, and by the anguished face of the king who had once been mad and now was sane. And it seemed to him that every night an angel with dusky wings and a sword that was bright with blood stood by his bed and showed him a battlefield covered with dead and dying, and held the sword towards him, saying, "This is your work, Alexander, therefore rejoice." And when the angel vanished a devil appeared in his place, and patted Alexander on the back, saying, "Bravo, bravo!" He, at any rate, was no mere vision, for Alexander

found the marks of the fingers printed plainly on his shoulder next morning. Alexander became very sad, and his nerves got into a terrible state, so that the visions became more and more poignant. And when he had thought carefully about his whole career he beat his breast and wept, crying, "Certainly I am the scourge of the world and an emissary of the devil who complimented me so sincerely on my achievements, for I seek to do good, and always nothing but evil and bloodshed and human misery follows. This is the punishment of my pride, and of my desire to triumph over Irenæus, to whom, on every occasion, I have been careful to send a pigeon bearing an account of my achievement. I will attempt one more miracle, and if it harms even a single poor animal I shall know it for a sign that my work is not pleasing to Heaven, and I will return to my former trade. For truly it is better to be the meanest mender of pots and to mend them well than to be the greatest saint whose miracles cause ruin and the shedding of blood."

And he went and dwelt amongst a tribe of fishermen who lived on the border of a great lake, and helped them in their fishing, and wrought no miracle for many months.

Now, the tribe depended entirely for its livelihood on the fish that inhabited the lake. And it befell that in the autumn a plague arose amongst the fish and they all died, whereupon the inhabitants of the surrounding villages suffered terrible privations and were likely to starve. Alexander, that holy man, felt that the moment for his help had arrived, and that he had at last found the chance of performing a miracle which could hurt none and would be advantageous to all. He debated within himself as to the form which it should take; at first he decided to replenish the lake with miraculous fish, but he soon discovered that this was a task beyond his powers. He was still in doubt when, as he chanced to go a short journey, he found that there was a second great lake situated some five miles away from the other; it was teeming with fish, but the right of capturing them was jealously guarded by the folk who dwelt on its borders. Alexander thought over the affair very carefully, and decided that if half the fish in the second lake could be miraculously induced to glide or wriggle over the intervening land, which was low and marshy (*ager paludosus et jacens*, says Garrulus), into the first, no one would incur damage and many lives would be saved. The miracle succeeded admirably; half the total number of fish in one lake left it at sunset, floundered gallantly along all night and soon after dawn next day flopped thankfully into the other. The starving fishermen spent the whole day capturing them in nets, and extolled the virtue and wisdom of Alex-

ander. Alexander was delighted with his success, but on this occasion he refrained from sending a pigeon to Irenæus.

Alas for Alexander! his joy was terribly brief. No sooner had the people of the district eaten the fish which had made that wonderful journey than they were overcome by a rare and painful sickness, which also afflicted the sojourners in cities to which they sent a great part of their draughts. It seems Alexander was ignorant that there were two species of fish in the distant lake, one edible and wholesome, the other poisonous; and when he commanded the fish to leave the waters a great number of the poisonous kind dutifully obeyed him. No one died of the sickness which they caused, but many persons were extremely ill and suffered fierce torment in the region of the belly. Alexander became painfully unpopular and went in danger of his life, until a committee of the oldest fishermen decided that he should not be slain, but that he should be banished for ever from their country. And being desirous of carrying out this decree in a manner humiliating to the saint, they wrapped him tightly in a long and evil-smelling fishing-net and rolled him out of their village as if he were a cask.

When Alexander at last broke free from the net he found that he was covered with bruises and unable to stand. But the soreness of his body was as nothing in comparison with the melancholy of his mind, and he was tempted to regret that the fishermen had permitted him to live. He crawled into a little coppice that was on the edge of the road, and then he fell on his knees and beat his breast and bewailed his evil fortune. It was plain at last, he thought, that his miracles were not acceptable to Heaven, and that he ought to have remained a mediocre and worldly tinker. He cursed the spiritual pride which had led him to seek renown and to despatch vainglorious messages by pigeon-post to Irenæus on every possible occasion, and he solemnly renounced the miraculous art for ever. After this, being utterly weary and sore, he slept.

And whilst he was deep in slumber he saw a vision of an angel, marvellously bright, with silver wings, and eyes full of pity. Alexander begged the angel to depart, assuring him that he had got into company unfit for any heavenly and respectable personage. But the angel only smiled, and said, "Alexander, I am sent to tell you that you are on no account to be depressed and to become a tinker. For though you have been a fool you are not to imagine that you are not a good man and even a saint. The combination of folly and saintliness is not so rare as many people imagine it to be."

Alexander felt slightly consoled by the words of the angel, though he thought privately that the tone adopted by his

heavenly visitor was a trifle pompous.

"Then I am to continue to perform miracles?" he asked.

The angel shook his head and smiled again.

"No," said the angel. "You are, as I said, a good man, Alexander, and have lived down the evil reputation of your family with fair success. But for a worker of miracles goodness alone is not sufficient. There is another quality which is indispensable to him — a quality which you will never possess to any great extent. Therefore you must work no more miracles."

Alexander sighed, for in spite of his previous renunciation his art was dear to him. "What is this quality which I lack?" he asked. "If I had been told of it earlier I would have cultivated it. What is its name on earth?"

"Its name," replied the angel, "is a sacred name. I will not breathe it now, but I have written it down, and after I have gone you may read it. And when you have read it, remember through all your life that without it all good works are worthless." And he handed him a visiting-card with the blank side uppermost.

"I know what it is," said Alexander pettishly, for his bruises were hurting him, and he was somewhat irritated by the superior airs of the angel. "I know perfectly well what it is," he continued; "it's charity. But I am seething with charity."

The angel smiled. "Charity is not the word," he said.

"Then it's faith," said Alexander. "But I've got faith too. Didn't I move the mountain? I don't believe that you have really studied the history of my career."

"I know it all by heart," answered the heavenly messenger, "for I, oh Alexander, am your guardian angel. But even a guardian angel is of little avail unless you possess the quality written on my card. Good evening, Alexander."

"Oh! good-night," said Alexander, not very politely. The angel vanished, and Alexander turned the card. On it was written in golden letters one short word. And the word was TACT.

Alexander wrought no more miracles, but he became famous as a worker amongst the poor, the sick, and the sorrowful. He kept up his tinkering, but purely as a hobby, and from being the most hated person in the Thebaïd he became immensely beloved by everyone. All through his life, says Garrulus, it was noticed that he could not eat fish, and had a dislike (if dislike could exist in so charitable a breast) of talkative women. He founded, indeed, the first of the great Silent Orders, of which the members were for many centuries recruited mainly from the more loquacious of the two sexes; and when he was Archimandrite of Ethiopia he evinced a keen interest in institutions for the deaf and dumb, strictly forbidding any workers of miracles to approach within two miles of them. He is also

famous as the first of the early Fathers who showed any symptoms of toleration for the fine arts; and caused, indeed, a great scandal in the Council of Ecbatana by asserting that a love of the beautiful was not invariably fatal to salvation, and that it might even wean the mind of its possessor from the lusts and cruelties of a bloodthirsty world,—a heresy which caused the venerable Patriarch of Cappadocia to dash his mitre on the floor and call (an unheard-of request in that environment) for soap and water. In short, Alexander became an excellent, practical person, and proved by his own example that more good may be accomplished by one life spent in active devotion to others than by all the miracles of a hundred short-sighted mystics. For a further account of his deeds I must refer the reader to the effete but amusing Latin of Garrulus, which dances a sprightly minuet through the pages of Doctor Schwätzer's edition, with the long-drawn notes of that celebrated pedant acting as a kind of ponderous ground-bass. It is suspected that a certain tomb in the beautiful Aliscamps of Arles formerly contained the mortal remains of Alexander. A broken bucket which is carved on the side of the sarcophagus beneath an Archimandrite's *cappa* lends weight to this theory, which is strongly supported by such solemn authorities as Professor Steinharterzigkeit and Mr Theodore Andrea Cook.

MAGDALEN COLLEGE.

OXFORD—that is, the city of Oxford—has recently been celebrating what it is pleased to term its "millenary," though why it should have chosen this particular year for the celebration, or what after all it has to celebrate, it would be difficult to say. Oxford certainly existed as a Mercian stronghold long before 912, and it owes its importance in history—first, to its being one of the strongest fortresses in England, with its massive walls and encircling streams; secondly, to its becoming the chosen home of the great religious orders; and thirdly, to its being the seat of a famous University. But the town itself has always played a subordinate part and been overshadowed by its predominant partner. Apart from the University, it has not produced a single man of eminence, except Chillingworth, the philosopher. If the colleges and university buildings were taken away, there would hardly be a single edifice left, with the exception of a few churches, on which a stranger would care to look a second time. Oxford would even lose the University Church of St Mary's and the Cathedral, which is part and parcel of Christ Church. The few buildings which might have delighted an antiquary, such as Cranmer's prison in Bocardo, Friar Bacon's study on Folly Bridge, and the old gates in the city walls, have been ruthlessly swept away; and with the exception of the four main streets, now dignified by the long lines of colleges, Oxford is a city of mean and uninteresting by-lanes intersected by stagnant watercourses.

The Augustinians and Benedictines had long been settled in Oxford when, in the thirteenth century, it was invaded by the three great Mendicant Orders —"friars black, white, and grey"—Dominicans, Carmelites, and Franciscans, who founded convents, opened halls and hostels, and attracted a vast number of scholars to their lectures and disputations. This, in fact, was the beginning of the University; and for a time Oxford rivalled Paris as the most popular centre of learning in Europe. We are told by a modern historian that "the University found it a busy, prosperous borough, and reduced it to a cluster of lodging-houses." But surely, if the prosperity of Oxford at that time depended on its trade, such trade must have been increased tenfold by the immense influx of scholars and the requirements of so many large monasteries. The slowly moving barges, which came up the river from Abingdon, must have been laden with corn to be ground at the city mills, with wool to be woven into the rough gowns worn by the monks and scholars, with hides for the tanneries, and with salt fish for the Lenten

meals. We know that great fairs — St Frideswyde's, St Austin's, and St Giles'—were held under the patronage of the Friars; that trade-guilds —the cordwainers, the mercers, and the weavers—were formed; and that the Jews—then, as ever, engaged in "the Sabbathless pursuit of riches"—had their synagogue and stone houses in the heart of the city,[1] and, as we know from documents, lent money to the scholars at a high rate of usury. These facts undoubtedly indicate a high degree of commercial prosperity; but this prosperity depended entirely on external and adventitious causes. In itself Oxford had no resources to fall back upon. It had no mineral wealth and no manufactures to speak of. It certainly would not find favour as a health-resort. The demand creates the supply, and when the demand had ceased and the Thames was no longer the great highway of trade, Oxford would have sunk to the level of a second-rate provincial borough—nay, it might have become as dead, buried, and forgotten as Old Sarum itself. From this deplorable fate it was saved by the foundation of richly endowed colleges, which have proved a never-failing source of wealth and popularity to an ungrateful town. The first of these colleges was founded in Henry III.'s reign (1264) by Walter de Merton, whose name it bears, and University and Balliol followed shortly afterwards. But throughout this century Oxford only too faithfully reflected the spirit of unrest and turmoil which pervaded England. It was a perfect hotbed of contending factions—

> "North against South; Scotch against Irish; both against Welsh; town against gown; academics against monks; Nominalists against Realists; juniors against seniors; the whole university against the bishop of the diocese, against the archbishop of the province, against the Chancellor of its own election — were constantly arrayed against each other. . . . Carfax, the point of junction between the two hostile parties, was turned into a fortress, and thither at the blowing of horns the townsmen collected, either as a rendezvous for attack or as a stronghold to annoy the enemy with volleys of arrows or stones. Thence, too, the tocsin was sounded by the town, as from St Mary's by the University, when the two parties met in hostile array,—pitched battles were fought with war standards unfurled, sometimes in the adjacent fields."[2]

The long series of outrages and free fights culminated in the famous affray which took place on the Feast of St Scholastica in 1354, when, taking advantage of a tavern brawl, the townsmen made a furious and unprovoked attack upon the scholars,—breaking into their halls and lodgings, destroying their goods, plundering their chests, killing some forty outright and grievously maiming and wounding hun-

[1] Some of the early halls occupied the large stone houses built by the Jews, —*e.g.*, Moysey Hall, Lombard Hall, Jacob's Hall, &c.

[2] This description by Dean Stanley is quoted in 'Murray's Handbook to Oxfordshire,' which has an excellent account of Oxford by the late Augustus Hare.

dreds of others. They even summoned within the gates a savage mob of countrymen who paraded the streets with black banners and cries of "Slay! slay! Havoc! havoc!" But this time both the papal legate and the king inflicted condign punishment on the aggressors. The town was laid under an interdict which was not removed for three years. The townsmen were heavily fined and surrendered many of their rights and privileges to the University; the mayor and bailiffs were committed to the Tower and afterwards had to do public penance at St Mary's, on the anniversary of the outbreak, with halters round their necks —indicating the fate which they assuredly deserved. From this date the University held its own.

Meanwhile, other colleges had been founded,—most of them recalling—as has often been pointed out—some event or crisis in our national history. Thus, Oriel is the outcome of a vow made by Edward II. on his flight from Bannockburn; Queen's was founded by Queen Philippa's chaplain; All Souls by Archbishop Chichele, as a chantry where prayers should be offered for the souls of those "who died fighting for the crown of France"; New College—most elaborate of all—was built by the great prelate and architect of Windsor to counteract the influence of Wickliffe and uphold the authority of the Church; while Magdalen itself is associated with the Wars of the Roses—*flores inscripti nomina regum*—for it was founded by Henry VI.'s most trusted friend and Chancellor, William of Waynflete, who discarded his family name of Patten for that of his birthplace in Lincolnshire.

No attempt is made in these pages to give a detailed history of the Founder and his work. Two admirable histories already exist — one written by Mr Harrison, the librarian of the College, and the other by the present President. Generally speaking, the annals of a college are—and indeed ought to be—uneventful. There are no startling episodes or picturesque incidents. Life flows on as smoothly and methodically —hours of sober study alternating with decorous festivity —as in the village of the Vicar of Wakefield; and in term time the only "migrations," if not exactly "from the blue room to the brown," are equally staid and prosaic — from the lecture-room to the chapel or from the hall to the Common Room. But it has more than once happened in the past history of Magdalen that the College has come into active contact with the history of the nation, and on one occasion played a leading part in a great National crisis.

But to return to "Master William," as Henry VI. used to call his Chancellor. We know little of his early life except that he was educated at Oxford, was appointed Master of Winchester School in 1429, where he attracted the king's notice and became

Master and then Provost of Eton College. From this time his advancement was rapid. He became the king's most trusted friend and adviser, and on the very day of Cardinal Beaufort's death in 1447, Waynflete was appointed by a special *congé d'élire* to the vacant see of Winchester. In the following year he began what was to be from henceforth his life's work; and, looking at the facts and circumstances, nothing is more remarkable than his single-hearted devotion to this noble task, sacrificing time and money and using his great influence towards founding a college which was to rival Wykeham's foundation at Oxford and Henry VI.'s at Cambridge. He bided his time with inexhaustible patience, never hurrying the work and taking no risks; basing his foundation, as it were, upon a rock of adamant; each step in its progress being sanctioned by royal charters, confirmed by successive monarchs and by Papal Bulls. He thus avoided the dangers which had threatened the existence of Oriel and for a time eclipsed the glories of Christ Church. In the same cautious spirit, he procured the formal sanction of King and Pope to the "annexation" of the various Priories, from which, in addition to private benefactions, the revenues of his College were mainly derived, and whose names are still familiar to us in the list of the College benefices—Shoreham, Brackley, Aynho, Romney, Selborne. Then again, one must recognise the tact shown by Waynflete in conciliating four sovereigns of different dynasties and dissimilar characters, and securing their goodwill towards his new foundation. It is clear that his lofty aims and disinterested munificence gained him respect even in that turbulent and unscrupulous age.

His first step was to purchase some land, near the site of the present examination schools, from the Hospital of St John, in 1448; and there he founded Magdalen Hall, consisting of a president and fifty scholars. During the next ten years—almost the most troubled period of our history—Waynflete, as Bishop of Winchester, was greatly occupied with affairs of State; but when he became Lord Chancellor in 1457 he reverted to his original plan, which had evidently been long maturing in his mind. He obtained Henry's consent (afterwards ratified by the Pope) to annex the whole of the domains belonging to St John's Hospital, which occupied the site of the present College buildings. There was no injustice in this, for the hospital, founded by Henry III. for the entertainment of pilgrims to St Frideswyde's shrine and "the relief of poor scholars and other miserable (*sic*) persons," had long since fallen into decay and disrepute. Waynflete pensioned off the few remaining brethren, took possession of the domain, and formally incorporated the hospital with Magdalen Hall and subsequently with the College.

To use his own words, his design was "to change earthly things to heavenly and things transitory to things eternal." Instead of the food and lodging provided for poor travellers, there was to be gratuitous instruction in theology and philosophy provided not only for the sixty graduates of the new Foundation, but for all "poor scholars" who chose to apply for it.

Hitherto all had gone well with Waynflete's scheme, thanks to his tact and energy, but now a long delay ensued before the building of his new College was actually commenced. The country was still distracted by rival factions, and the civil war, then raging, made life and property insecure. Waynflete continued Chancellor, but in 1460 he gave up the Great Seal to Henry in his tent, pitched in the meadow near De la Prè Abbey, on the eve of the fatal battle of Northampton. On the following day the Lancastrians were utterly routed, and Henry himself was a prisoner in the hands of the Yorkists. Waynflete, however, procured a full pardon from the new King, as well as the confirmation of the charters of his College; and a significant document is preserved in the muniment-room showing that Waynflete had paid King Edward five thousand marks "for continuance of his good grace and favour."

At length, in 1467, when England was more or less at peace under the new *régime*, the actual work of building was commenced. First were built the enclosing walls—massive and substantial, as we see it now in Long Wall Street, and then serving as a necessary defence, owing to the isolated position of the College outside the city gates. At last, in 1474, the foundation-stone of the chapel was solemnly laid "in the midst of the high altar." Then followed what is known as "the old buildings"—the hall, the library, the cloisters, the Founder's Tower, and the muniment room, and lastly, the Grammar School, all built of stone from the Headington quarries, under the direction of Orcheyard, the architect and master mason. About 1480 this work was practically completed, and the buildings were already occupied by students.

As in the general design of his buildings, so in his statutes —first promulgated in 1482— Waynflete closely copied the model set him by William of Wykeham at New College, often, indeed, using the very words and phrases employed by his great predecessor. These statutes have a fine flavour of medievalism. They are partly academical, partly monastic and ascetic, and might have been framed by St Francis of Assisi or John Henry Newman. They enter into the minutest details of the organisation of the College, from the president to the choirmaster. There is to be the strictest discipline; the scholars are to sleep three or four in a room; their dress is to be rough, and their diet frugal; there are to be no luxuries or

superfluities, no games or amusements; there must be silence at meals; ordinary conversation must be in Latin, and for this purpose there is to be a preparatory school, where *Grammatica* is to be taught. There is to be a full choir and daily Mass, and above all, to quote the Founder's words, "Holy Scripture must spread her tents wider, that philosophy may militate under the banner of theology."[1] But Waynflete's liberal scheme of education extended far beyond the limits of his own College, for every poor scholar in the University was free to attend the lectures and disputations.

The College was now in full working order, and it was not long before there was a succession of royal visitors. In 1481, while the buildings were still incomplete, Edward IV. came over with a large cavalcade from Woodstock, and was hospitably entertained at Magdalen. It was probably on this occasion that the red Lancastrian rose in the cloisters was painted white in honour of the Yorkist king. Two years later Richard III. visited Oxford on a royal progress from London to York, and was received in state at Magdalen by Waynflete himself. That crafty monarch—in whom dissimulation was a second nature—dined in hall, listened to disputations by learned scholars, and so fascinated his hosts that the chronicler of his visit ends with the pious aspiration, *Vivat rex in æternum!* But though Waynflete had thought it prudent to conciliate Richard with a loan of £100, he was probably by no means displeased at the result of the battle of Bosworth; and, by his orders, the President of Magdalen (Dr Mayew) attended the coronation of Henry VII. This king himself visited Magdalen in 1487, and with characteristic meanness offered a single rose-noble as an oblation on the high altar. His eldest son, Prince Arthur, when a boy of nine or ten, stayed twice in the College, probably in the Founder's state-rooms, where there may still be seen some tapestry representing his marriage with Katharine of Aragon. That unhappy queen herself visited Magdalen in 1517, in company with Cardinal Wolsey, and must have gazed with mingled feelings on this memorial of her first marriage.

But Waynflete himself did not live to welcome either Henry or Prince Arthur at his College. He had died in the previous year—*felix opportunitate mortis*, for he had seen his life's work well advanced towards completion in the foundation of this noble College which he had left secure and prosperous after thirty-seven years of unremitting care and vigilance. He was buried not, as might have been expected, within the precincts of his own College, but in one of the beautiful side chapels of the cathedral at Winchester.

The foundation of Magdalen

[1] Chandler's 'Life of Waynflete,' p. 201.

coincides with what has been called the "New Learning" at Oxford. The reign of the Schoolmen, with their pedantic and barren controversies, was rapidly passing away, and the tardy English renaissance, which had been chilled and blighted by the long continuance of civil and foreign wars, was at length beginning. "Greek had crossed the Alps," and there is a significant entry in Anthony Wood's Diary that on Christmas Day, 1483, Cyprianus and Nicolaus "Italici" dined with the Vice-President at Magdalen. William Grocyn, the young disputant who had argued before Richard III. on his visit to the College, had studied Greek in Florence along with Linacre; and Lily and Colet, both connected with Magdalen, had also visited Italy and attended the lectures of "the great Politian." Some years later, Erasmus—too poor to study at Rome as he intended—had gone to Oxford, where he sat at the feet of Colet and declared that listening to his lectures was like listening to Plato himself. And while Cambridge had to hire the services of an Italian to write Latin speeches at twopence for each speech, at Oxford two Professorships in Greek and Latin were founded by Bishop Fox in 1517 in his new college of Corpus Christi. Fox had played many parts in his time—"prelate, statesman, architect, soldier, herald, and diplomatist"—and now in his old age he founded a college which was to be the chosen home of the *Literæ Humaniores*.[1] He singled out his intimate friend, John Claymond, who had succeeded Dr Mayew as President of Magdalen, to be the first President of Corpus; and with Claymond several Magdalen Fellows migrated to Fox's college, including Henry VIII.'s cousin, Reginald Pole, the future Cardinal.

Six years after Waynflete's death, in 1492, the corner-stone of the great bell-tower was solemnly laid by the President, Dr Mayew, and in 1504 the tunable and melodious bells, as Anthony Wood calls them, were placed in it. This tower is the crowning glory of the picturesque group of buildings, and its singularly graceful outline and proportions give the finishing touch to the stately curve of the High Street. According to Dean Stanley, the tower "owes its creation to the genius of Wolsey," but he certainly was not the designer or architect, and it is doubtful if he was even a Fellow when the building began. Still less is it true that he misappropriated money from the Bursary and had to leave the College in consequence. This is one of the stories circulated after his death to the discredit of the great Cardinal. It has always been the popular instinct to trample on a fallen favourite:

"Dum jacet in ripâ, calcemus Cæsaris hostem."

[1] Dr Ingram's 'Memorials of Oxford.' Bishop Fox was a benefactor to both Universities, and was Master of Pembroke College, Cambridge, from 1507 to 1519.

Though Wolsey was twice bursar while the Tower was being built, a petty theft, such as he is charged with, was entirely alien to his character. When he robbed, it was on a grander scale. As his biographer says, "nothing mean could enter this man's mind." His connection with Magdalen was long and intimate. Even when he had annexed all the great offices in Church and State, and was Chancellor, Cardinal, and Papal legate, he took the keenest interest in his old College as well as in University affairs, and for many years his masterful spirit dominated Oxford as it dominated England. But, on the whole, he was an enlightened and benevolent despot. When he founded Cardinal College, it was in Magdalen that he sought for a suitable head, and the President, Dr Higdon, became the first Dean of what was afterwards called Christ Church. Several of the Canons were selected from the Magdalen Fellows; and among Wolsey's own chaplains, three (at least) were Magdalen men.

But, even while Cardinal College was being organised with all the elaborate ritual of the Roman Church, the spirit of reform and antagonism, which had smouldered since the days of Wickliffe, was revived by the preaching of Luther. The Gospels were no longer a sealed book; thousands of copies of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament found a ready sale, and an association known as "the Christian Brotherhood" was formed in London for the purpose of distributing them. One of the most active of the "brethren" was Thomas Garrett—an ex-Fellow of Magdalen. He returned to Oxford from his curacy of All-Hallows, laden with books and pamphlets, and found many proselytes both at Magdalen and at Wolsey's new college, where, says Anthony Wood, "certain scholars had been imported from Cambridge, who had been brought up in that poor and low kind of learning there used." Wolsey at once sent orders for Garrett's arrest, and he was looked up in the Commissary's (Vice-Chancellor's) rooms. The story of his escape and subsequent adventures is told at length by his friend Arthur Delaber, of St Alban Hall, whose narrative is pronounced by Froude to be "the most vivid picture that remains to us of a fraction of English life in the reign of Henry VIII."[1] Only a short extract from Delaber's graphic story can be given here. Garrett had escaped for the time, and was supposed to be on his way to Dorsetshire, and Delaber hurried off to Christ Church to give the news to some of the "brethren" there.

"Evensong was begun; the dean and the canons were there in their grey amices; they were almost at Magnificat before I came thither. I stood in the choir door and heard

[1] Froude's 'History of England,' chapter vi., with its eloquent account of the sufferings of the Protestants.

Master Taverner play, and others of the chapel there sing, with and among whom I myself was wont to sing also; but now my singing and music were turned into sighing and musing. As I there stood, in cometh Dr Cottisford, the commissary, as fast as ever he could go, bareheaded, as pale as ashes (I knew his grief well enough); and to the dean he goeth into the choir, where he was sitting in his stall, and talked with him, very sorrowfully: what, I know not; but whereof I might and truly guess. I went aside from the choir door to see and hear more. The commissary and the dean came out of the choir, wonderfully troubled as it seemed. About the middle of the church met them Dr London, puffing, blustering, and blowing like a hungry and greedy lion seeking his prey. They talked together awhile: but the commissary was much blamed by them, insomuch that he wept for sorrow."

Garrett was rearrested near Bristol, and imprisoned with others of "the Brethren." Many of these prisoners (including Garrett himself) recanted their heresy, and underwent a public penance, walking in procession with faggots on their shoulders, from St Mary's to Carfax, where the faggots were cast into a fire in which their books were also burnt, just as a few years previously a similar holocaust had taken place at St Paul's Cathedral, in the presence of the great Cardinal himself.[1] Later on, Garrett became one of Latimer's chaplains, and suffered a martyr's death at Smithfield.

As English history during the fifteenth century might be summed up in the words of the Litany as "battle, murder, and sudden death," so the early part of the sixteenth century is record of "plague, pestilence, and famine." Between the years 1500 and 1529 there were frequent outbreaks of what was known as "the sweating sickness"—a kind of putrid fever, which attacked Englishmen only. It was especially virulent at Oxford, where four hundred students, including several promising scholars at Magdalen, are said to have died of it in a week, and in 1528 and 1529 it was raging both in Magdalen and New College. Hence came the constant migrations of the Magdalen scholars to Witney and Brackley, in search of purer air and a healthier surrounding. Oxford itself in those days was a hotbed of pestilence. The marshy ground, the defective drainage, the polluted drinking-water, the crowded space within the city walls, the ill-ventilated rooms, the woollen clothes, the scarcity of linen, the enforced diet of salt meat in Lent,—these were all contributory causes, and to them must be added what Hecker calls "the Scythian filth of English habitations."[2]

Partly from the scourge of pestilence, partly from the scarcity of food and the cost of living, and partly also because the endowed colleges were taking the place of the impoverished

[1] The faggots were of course symbolical of the fate which ought to have befallen the heretics who carried them.

[2] 'Epidemics of the Middle Ages.'

halls, the number of scholars diminished rapidly during the reign of Henry VIII. Sixteen halls were closed altogether, and others were falling into ruin. Learning itself was at its lowest ebb. The brilliant circle which had surrounded Colet and Erasmus had long ago dispersed, and with the Reformation a blight seemed to have fallen upon University studies. Froude has described the scenes of anarchy and profanation which prevailed at Oxford: "Missals were chopped in pieces with hatchets; college libraries were plundered and burnt; the divinity schools were planted with cabbages, and Oxford laundresses dried their linen in the Schools of Arts." At this time, about 1550, cartloads of manuscripts perished in a bonfire, and two noble libraries were sold for waste paper. The only good thing effected by the Commission which authorised these acts of vandalism was that they abolished for ever the tyranny of the Schoolmen, and, as one of them phrased it, "put Duns [*i.e.*, Duns Scotus] in Bocardo."

Magdalen, of course, suffered like other colleges from the ignorant zeal of the Reformers. The altars in the chapel were destroyed, the walls plastered, and the magnificent copes and vestments which had come down from the Founder's time were sold for fifty pounds. There was a partial restoration of the fabric in Mary's reign, and Mass was again celebrated "according to the use of Sarum." Sixteen of the Fellows who would not use "Popish prayers" were expelled, and the unfortunate undergraduates who absented themselves from Mass were whipped at the Buttery! But though it was a time of unrest and disquiet, the Visitor (Stephen Gardiner) was not disposed to deal harshly with the College.

On Elizabeth's accession the chapel again suffered from acts of vandalism. The altars and rood-screen were removed, the images destroyed, and the vestments and communion plate sold. "Conformity" was strictly enjoined in the use of the Common Prayer Book and the surplice. The new President, Laurence Humphrey, was a distinguished scholar and divine; but he was also a sturdy Calvinist, and (as Mr Harrison says of him) "lacked the sense of proportion in matters of ritual controversy." He flatly refused to "conform" in the matter of wearing a surplice or a doctor's robes, in spite of Archbishop Parker's threats and entreaties. But, apparently, as time went on, he took a saner view of the situation. In 1566, Queen Elizabeth visited Oxford on one of her progresses; and Humphrey was one of "the four doctors in scarlet habits" who met her at Wolvercot, as she drove in her carriage from Woodstock. The Queen gave him her hand to kiss, but as he was making his obeisance, she observed: "Dr Humphrey, methinks this gown and habit become you very well, and I marvel you are so strait-laced on this point — but I come

not now to chide." And then her *cortége* passed through Bocardo, up the Cornmarket, lined with enthusiastic students, to the Dean's lodgings at Christ Church. The Queen won all hearts by her affability and good temper. She listened with admirable patience to laudatory odes and learned disputations, and sat out the most tedious stage-plays. She talked as familiarly and kindly to the young scholars as if she had been their elder sister; called them "saucy boys" and patted them on the head.

"So five bright days passed swiftly, and on the sixth she rode away over Magdalen bridge to Windsor. As she crested Headington hill, she reined in her horse and once more looked back. There at her feet lay the city in its beauty, the towers and spires springing from amidst the clustering masses of the college elms; there wound beneath their shade the silvery lines of the Cherwell and the Isis. 'Farewell, Oxford!' she cried, 'farewell, my good subjects there!—farewell, my dear scholars, and may God prosper your studies!—farewell, farewell!'"[1]

Much water had flowed under Magdalen bridge before the Queen again crossed it. This was twenty-five years later, when she was aged and worn by the cares of State, but had the same indomitable spirit as ever. She alighted at Magdalen, and with her retinue was entertained at a banquet in the College hall, where she listened to the usual speeches and disputations. This was her last visit.

Laurence Humphrey — able man as he undoubtedly was — seems to have failed completely as a President. Formal complaint was made to the Visitor in 1585 of the abuses and irregularities in the discipline as well as in the lectures and chapel services; the non-observance of the statutes, and the large influx of idle and wealthy commoners, who, according to Anthony Wood, did nothing but amuse themselves: "They never studied nor gave themselves to their books, but spent their time in the fencing and dancing schools, in stealing deer and conies, in hunting the hare and wooing girls."[2] He also tells a story, which, however, is ignored in the records kept in the muniment-room. Some scholars of Magdalen had been stealing deer in Shotover Park, and one of them, Thomas Godstow, was caught by the keepers and imprisoned by Lord Norris. His friends determined to rescue him, and, "with their gowns girt about them and armed with divers sorts of weapons," they attacked Lord Norris and his retainers in the Bear Inn. There was a furious conflict, and one of the keepers was badly wounded, but the proctors appeared and the Vice-Chancellor confined all scholars to their colleges till my Lord's departure.

"But the scholars of Magdalen College, not being able to pocket these affronts, went up privately to the top of their Tower, and waiting till he [Lord Norris] should pass by towards Ricot, sent down a shower of stones they had picked up upon him and his

[1] Froude's 'History of England,' chapter xlv.
[2] Quoted in Bloxam's Register, II., 99.

retinew, wounding some and endangering others of their lives. It is said that upon the foresight of this storm divers had got boards, others tables on their heads, to keep them from it, and if the Lord had not been in his coach or chariot, he would certainly have been killed."

The authorities (Wood adds) had some trouble in pacifying Lord Norris by expelling certain of the ringleaders of this escapade and severely punishing others.

It was perhaps owing to this and other circumstances that on the death of Laurence Humphrey in 1589 the Queen took the unusual step of setting aside the Fellows' nominee, and appointing one of her own chaplains and an ex-Fellow, Dr Nicholas Bond, to be President, by letters patent. In spite of the attacks of the Marprelate Press, who miscalled him "The Bond of Iniquity," he made an excellent President, as well as Vice-Chancellor, carrying out useful reforms in the lectures and studies, and placing the finances in a thoroughly sound condition, and for the first time in the history of the College there seems to have been a large surplus in the revenue, which was divided *pro rata* among the President and Fellows.

James I. visited Magdalen in 1605, when he emphatically pronounced the College to be "the most absolute thing [*i.e.*, the most absolutely perfect thing] in Oxford." In honour of his visit, the uncouth figures round the cloisters were repainted, and "Moses appeared in a new coat of green"! James I.'s eldest son, Prince Henry—"the young Marcellus of the House of Stuart"—is said to have matriculated at the College. Chivalrous, highly gifted, amiable, and popular with all classes, his character stands out in strong relief among the libertines and parasites of his father's dissolute court. He was devoted to manly sports—tennis, shooting, hunting, and tossing the pike—and was an adept (says a writer) "in another Scotch game very like Mall." In face and figure he was said to resemble his namesake, Henry V., whose character Bishop Stubbs has painted for us in such glowing colours.[1] We are told that the victor of Agincourt was the young prince's favourite hero, and that among his day-dreams was the recapture of Calais. Had Prince Henry lived, there can be little doubt that the course of our history would have run very differently. He was a staunch Protestant, if not a Puritan, and according to a popular rhyme—

"Henry VIII. pulled down abbots and cells,
Henry IX. shall pull down bishops and bells."

[1] 'Constitutional History of England,' vol. iii. p. 77: "No sovereign who ever reigned has won from contemporary writers such a singular unison of praises. He was religious, pure in life, temperate, liberal, careful and yet splendid, merciful, truthful and honourable; 'discreet in word, provident in counsel, prudent in judgment, modest in look, magnanimous in act;' a brilliant soldier, a sound diplomatist, an able organiser and consolidator of all forces at his command; the restorer of the English navy, the founder of our military, international, and maritime law."

His sympathies would have been rather with Pym and Hampden than with Laud or Strafford; and we should have been spared the calamities of a Civil War and a Protectorate. But, unhappily for himself and the country, the "darling of his age" (as a writer calls him) died of a fever in his nineteenth year.

In the early days of Elizabeth's reign Oxford had been the stronghold of Catholics; towards its close it had become "the hotbed of Puritanism," and this tendency became even more marked under James I. The very name of the President in 1626 — Accepted Frewen—is a sign of the times. He was an ex-Fellow, and had been chaplain to Sir John Digby, at Madrid, at the time of the projected "Spanish Marriage," and a remarkable sermon which he preached in the presence of Prince Charles on the text, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" and urging him not to forsake the Church of England, is said to have induced the Prince to break off the match. But his Puritanism disappeared after he became President, for in 1630 we find him posing as the champion of Laud and the High Church reaction, and restoring the chapel to something of its splendour before the Reformation. The College was well governed and peaceful under Frewen's administration, when in 1642 came the first ominous signs of the approaching Civil War, in a proclamation "repressing the present rebellion," and a letter from the king asking for a loan of money. The College promised £1000, of which Frewen was to pay the half, to avoid selling the plate. Then followed Sir John Byron's fitful occupation of the city. He carried off a hundred volunteers with him when he left, amongst whom was Dr John Nourse of Magdalen, who was killed shortly afterwards at Edgehill, fighting gallantly in front of his company.

In October of the same year Charles himself entered Oxford, which became a fortified camp and the Royalist headquarters. Magdalen bridge was strongly barricaded. The king's "ordnance and great guns" were parked in the Grove; the trees in the Walks were cut down, and a battery erected at the north-east corner, called "Dover Pier," after Lord Dover, who commanded the University corps. Then it was that "Rupert's trumpets sounded to horse in those quiet cloisters," and it is possible that the Prince himself may have lodged in the College, where a fine portrait of him, by a pupil of Vandyck, hangs above the High Table in the hall.

Charles himself lodged at Christ Church; the Queen held her Court at Merton, while the city itself was thronged by a brilliant and motley society, as described for us in the pages of 'John Inglesant,' when representatives of every rank and class were crowded within the narrow walls bounded by the Isis and the Cherwell. The Mint was transferred from Shrewsbury to Oxford, and all the College plate,

to the value of £900, with the exception of the Founder's Cup, was melted down.

The siege itself was not a serious affair. Fairfax and Essex had batteries on Headington Hill and at Hinksey, and the king and Prince Rupert watched their attack from Magdalen Tower; but, fortunately for the College buildings, their fire was weak and ineffectual. The siege lingered on until Naseby extinguished the last hope of the Royalists. The garrison surrendered to Fairfax, and were allowed to march out with all the honours of war — drums beating and flags flying — through long lines of sullen Roundheads, over Magdalen bridge, "on the rainiest day of a rainy summer" in 1646. Then came a gloomy time for Oxford. Magdalen especially suffered, as it was the first College visited by the Commissioners sent down by the Parliament. Few of the members on the Foundation, whether Fellows or Demies, could be induced to recognise the authority of the Parliament, and returned either negative or evasive answers to the questions put by the Commission. Most of them were expelled, and their places filled by Presbyterians and Independents. The President (Dr Oliver) was deprived of his office and his place filled by John Wilkinson, whom Anthony Wood — perhaps a little unjustly — calls "an illiterate, testy old creature, who had outlived the little learning he had." Cromwell and Fairfax dined in the hall at Magdalen in 1649, and it was then that the painted glass in the chapel is said to have been trampled under foot by the troopers in attendance; but, oddly enough, the heads of Charles I. and his Queen on the oriel window in the hall apparently escaped their notice. The College suffered two other serious losses. By some unaccountable negligence, the Founder's mitre and crozier — two priceless relics, valued even at that time at £2000 — were handed over to two strangers, and probably found their way to a London goldsmith's melting-pot. Then a quantity of gold coins, of the value of £1400, known as "old Edwards" or "spur-royals," — which had been kept since the Founder's day in a chest in the muniment-room, to be used only in some desperate emergency, — were abstracted and divided among the Fellows and Demies. Much of it was restored later, but not all in the original gold.

Thomas Goodwin, who became President in 1650, was a Cambridge man, and an Independent preacher. He affected a curious head-gear, which gave him the name of "Nine-caps," and made himself ridiculous by his ultra-sanctified airs. Addison has recorded the experiences of Mr Anthony Henley, who was a candidate for a Fellowship, and called at the President's lodgings. He was shown into a room hung with black, with the curtains drawn, and lighted by a single taper, though it was noon-day. Presently the President entered,

"with half-a-dozen nightcaps on his head, and religious horror in his countenance," and instead of examining him in Latin and Greek, inquired if he abounded in grace, if he was of the number of the elect, and the date and particulars of his conversion.

"The whole of the Examination was summed up in one short Question —namely, *Whether he was prepared for Death?* The boy, who had been brought up by honest parents, was frightened out of his wits by the Solemnity of the Proceeding, and by the last dreaded Interrogatory, so that, upon making his escape out of the House of Mourning, he could never be brought a second time to the Examination, as not being able to go through the Terrors of it."[1]

The Restoration, of course, put an end to this sanctified cant, and the reign of the Saints was over. The ejected President and Fellows were formally restored by the Commission of 1660, and the surplice and Book of Common Prayer were again used in the Chapel services. But, in other respects, Oxford deteriorated: much corruption prevailed, and Fellowships were openly sold to the highest bidder, both at Magdalen and New College; discipline was lax, and Humphrey Prideaux's letters give a lurid description "of the dissolute and profane discourse of the scholars," who imitated not only "the periwiggs and pantaloons," but the manners and morals, of the Court of Charles II.[2]

But in the following reign the College was concerned with graver matters than petty offences against discipline, for in 1687 occurred the famous dispute with James II., which along with the trial of the Seven Bishops caused the Revolution of 1688. The story has been told at length by Macaulay, and only a brief summary need be given here. There was a vacancy in the Presidentship, and James II. thought it an excellent opportunity for adding another Roman Catholic Head of a College to the two already in office at University and Christ Church. It was, of course, no new thing for the sovereign to send a mandate or *congé d'élire* to the Fellows, but hitherto the royal nominee had always been morally and intellectually qualified for his high office. In this case, however, the king named one Anthony Farmer (a Roman Catholic), who was not only disqualified by the statutes, but a man of infamous character. The Fellows protested strongly, but in vain; and on the last available day they elected one of their own number, John Hough, in accordance with the statutes. This election was confirmed by the Visitor on the following day, and Hough took the necessary oaths and was installed in the President's lodgings.

James was furious at what he termed this disloyal contumacy. He visited Oxford himself, and sent a Royal Commission as well, to enforce obedience. But the Fellows

[1] 'Spectator,' No. 294.

[2] Letters to John Ellis (published by the Camden Society).

maintained a logical *non-possumus* when ordered to elect Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford (for Farmer's name had been withdrawn), to the Presidency. They had not the power, they said, even if they had the will, to violate the statutes and commit perjury. Hough had been legally elected, and there was no vacancy. They were not overawed by the furious threats of James, who told them they should feel the weight of a king's hand. Still less were they influenced by the jesuitical pleading of William Penn, the Quaker, who played an ignoble part as a go-between.[1] And the Commissioners themselves made no impression by rebukes, entreaties, or a display of armed force. When Hough was summoned before them, he made that memorable reply which (says Dr Ingram) deserves to be recorded in letters of gold: "My Lords, you have this day deprived me of my freehold; I hereby protest against all your proceedings as illegal, unjust, and null; and I appeal from you to our Sovereign Lord the King in his Courts of Justice." This spirited assertion of his rights was received with a loud hum of applause from the scholars who had followed him into the hall, to the great indignation of the Commissioners.

On that day (October 25) the President and twenty-five of the Fellows were ejected by the Commissioners, and by a refinement of cruelty were declared incapable of holding any Church preferment. The doors of the President's lodgings were broken open and Bishop Parker took up his residence there; but neither he nor the Vice-President, Charnock, could obtain any obedience or respect from the undergraduates, who refused to attend either lectures or chapels. Many of these youths were expelled and their places filled by Roman Catholics. Mass was celebrated daily, and Magdalen became for a time a Popish seminary. Bishop Parker's health soon broke down—it was said from sorrow and remorse, at having to expel the loyal Demies and admit in one day nine Roman Catholic Fellows. An old servant of his described this last event:—

"I never saw him in such a passion during the sixteen years I lived with him. He walked up and down the room and smote his breast and said: 'There is no trust in man; there is no trust in princes. Is this the kindness the king promised me? To set me here to make me his tool and his fool! To set me in a company of men, whom he knows I hate the conversation of!' So he sat down in his chair and went into a convulsive fit, and never went down stairs more till he was carried down. I am sure he was no Roman."[2]

[1] Macaulay states: "He [Penn] did not scruple to become a broker in simony of a peculiarly discreditable kind, and to use a Bishopric as a bait to tempt a divine to perjury" ('History,' ii. 299). Naturally this passage gave great offence to the Quakers, who sent a deputation to remonstrate; but Macaulay would neither qualify his expressions nor withdraw the passage (Trevelyan's 'Life of Macaulay,' ch. xii.)

[2] Quoted in Bloxam's 'Magdalen College and James II.,' p. 240.

On the evening of his deprivation, Dr Hough was dining with the Countess of Ossory—daughter-in-law of the Duke of Ormond—who said to him: "Take comfort, Doctor; 'tis but twelve months to this day twelve months." This prophecy was fulfilled to the letter, for within the year James II. had exhausted the patience and loyalty of his subjects, and William of Orange was preparing to invade England. On October 23, 1688, the Bishop of Winchester struck off the College books the names of all the Popish interlopers and replaced those of Dr Hough and his companions in exile. This event is still commemorated at Magdalen, by a grace-cup being passed round after dinner on the anniversary of the restoration of the Fellows, when each member of the society in turn solemnly drinks the toast—*Jus suum cuique!*

Although Oxford had little reason to love the Stuarts, the University remained true to its character as "the home of lost causes and impossible loyalties." Even after the crown had passed to the House of Hanover, there was a strong Jacobite faction both among the Fellows and the scholars, and their most uncompromising advocate and spokesman was Thomas Hearne, the antiquary, who took Anthony Wood's place as the annalist of Oxford. He belonged to a small society which met at Antiquity Hall, near Wadham, where they smoked long pipes and drank the health of "the king over the water" in "good, solid, edifying port which made a night cheerful and threw off reserve." Hearne always divides Society into "honest men," that is, non-Jurors and Jacobites, as opposed to "that fanatical crew," the Whigs. There were many "honest men" at Magdalen at that time, and the College was connected with the famous "troop of horse" sent by George I. to arrest a Jacobite officer, Colonel Owen, who was lodging in the Greyhound Inn, close to the College gates. Owen was warned in time, and made his escape over the wall by the grammar school, and it was not thought safe to pursue him.

In the first decade of the eighteenth century Joseph Addison and Henry Sacheverell were Fellows of the College, and in 1752 Edward Gibbon, the future historian, was admitted as a gentleman-commoner. In a well-known passage of his autobiography he describes his fourteen-months' residence as "the most idle and unprofitable" of his whole life, and speaks with bitter contempt of the studies and society that surrounded him,—just as Gray, a few years earlier, described Cambridge as fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, and being the abode of wild asses and screech owls. But we know, on good authority, that not even the youngest of us is infallible, and Gibbon was barely sixteen when he formed these impressions recorded by him in later years with such detestable self-com-

placency. An imaginative youth would have been inspired by the *genius loci* and the picturesque surroundings; a studious youth would have welcomed the ease and leisure in which he found himself; and assuredly Gibbon might have been well content with his "set of three beautiful rooms in that stately pile, the New Buildings of Magdalen," and, with the Bodleian close at hand, might have pursued his studies with as much ease and comfort as in his villa at Lausanne. But he made no pretence of study, and did not even attend the few lectures available to him, preferring instead "to elope" (as he calls it) to London and elsewhere. And it might be added that when he speaks of "the dull and deep potations" of the Magdalen Fellows, there was probably more decorum and less drunkenness in the society of the Common Room than at the Mess of the Hampshire Militia, where he afterwards caroused with John Wilkes and other boon companions. After being in residence for little more than a year, Gibbon suddenly became a Roman Catholic, and was promptly removed from Oxford by his father. Probably little regret was felt by the College authorities at his premature departure.

To the long list of the College benefactors must be added the name of William Freman—a gentleman-commoner in 1719—who presented a new peal of bells, as well as the beautiful painting by Ribalta, which forms the altar-piece in the chapel, and who bequeathed to the College some valuable property in the city, then known as Freman's Court.

There is little else of interest to record of Magdalen during the eighteenth century, but towards the close of it a singular and characteristic figure became associated with the College, who deserves special mention. This was Martin Joseph Routh, who matriculated, at the age of fourteen, in 1768, was elected President in 1791, and held that office till 1854, when he died in his hundredth year. He was a man of "prodigious erudition," especially in patristic theology; a great book-collector, and a perfect mine of interesting recollections and traditions. He had passed over the old wooden bridge at Magdalen, even then tottering to its fall, and through the East Gate, demolished in the following year. He had seen the prison of Bocardo and Friar Bacon's study, as well as the old Turl Gate and the conduit at Carfax, now in Nuneham Park. He had seen Dr Johnson himself, in his tradesman's wig and brown stockings, stumbling up the steps of University College, and had even seen—so it was said—two undergraduates hung for highway robbery on the gallows which then stood at the corner near Holywell Church. To the last Dr Routh preserved the deliberate speech, the dignified manner, and the punctilious courtesy of a bygone day, and he also affected the old-fashioned dress of a divine in the days of Queen Caroline—

a bishop's wig, a cassock and full gown, knee-breeches, and buckled shoes. He kept all his faculties to the last, and was excellent company when the subject interested him. On one occasion, quite late in his life, he kept his friend, Dr Jacobson, for two hours walking up and down in his old-fashioned garden, giving him a graphic account of "the 88," often quoting the very words of the speeches, painting Sunderland's character in the blackest colours, and being especially severe on Macaulay, who (he declared) had suppressed some facts and misstated others, and in fact was as little to be depended upon as Burnet.[1]

Another characteristic figure, though of a widely different type, was John Wilson, better known as "Christopher North," who entered Magdalen in 1803. His exuberant spirits, his powers of conversation, as well as his immense feats of strength and prowess in athletics, made him a favourite among all classes, from the learned President down to the grooms and servants of the College. Nothing delighted him more than to preside at a midnight supper at the Angel, when the London coaches came in, and he was the life and soul of other symposia in his own College—a fitting prelude to the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*—when the party wore large tie wigs, said to have descended from the days of Addison, and intended to preserve the hair from the fumes of tobacco smoke. But amidst all this dissipation, Wilson found time to read steadily. His knowledge of Aristotle and the Greek tragedians amazed and delighted his College tutor; and his examination for a degree—then conducted *vivâ voce* —was a crowning triumph, for he enjoyed the rare distinction of being publicly thanked by the examiners.

Many other notable names occur in the lists of the Demies and Fellows during Dr Routh's long term of office. Among them may be mentioned Henry Philpotts, the famous Bishop of Exeter; Robert Lowe and Roundell Palmer (afterwards Lord Selborne); James Mozley and Charles Reade; John Conington and Goldwin Smith.

Routh was succeeded in 1854 by Frederic Bulley, a man of dignified presence and courtly manners. It was mainly due to his tact and good sense, as well as to his intimate knowledge of the collegiate system, that the drastic—if inevitable —reforms, introduced by the two Commissions of 1856 and 1877, were carried into effect at Magdalen without undue friction and opposition. These reforms practically transformed the College from a close and privileged foundation to a free society, untrammelled by the conditions and restrictions of the past. The old statutes, many of which had long since become obsolete, were now abolished altogether. The election

[1] Dr Routh had a large collection of documents illustrating the reign of James II., and had himself edited Burnet's 'History of his Own Times.'

to demyships and fellowships was thrown open to all the world; the restrictions as to marriage and Holy Orders were withdrawn; some fellowships were suppressed and professorships founded out of the surplus revenue; the number of demyships was increased and an "Exhibition Fund" was created for the benefit of poor and deserving scholars.

The increased number of commoners made new buildings necessary, and in 1884 a new quadrangle (St Swithuns) was completed, reverting to an older style with tall chimneys and massive buttresses, and not offering such a glaring contrast to Waynflete's incomparable work as the Palladian pile of building erected in the previous century.

The reforms mentioned above owe much of their practical success to Dr Herbert Warren (the present president), who succeeded Dr Bulley in 1885, and who had previously done excellent work as a College tutor. It would be impertinent to do more than allude to his high qualifications for his office. He is not only an accomplished scholar and man of letters, as well as the Professor of Poetry, but has shown a remarkable capacity for business, both as President of his College and Vice-Chancellor of the University. Under his rule the College has flourished exceedingly; it has largely increased in numbers; it has taken a good position in the class-lists, and has become the favourite resort of public school men and athletes. In all respects, Magdalen does more than maintain its great traditions of the past, and the solemn aspiration of the Founder that "by divine favour the benefits conferred on that age might be continued down to future generations for ever" has been amply realised.[1] The generations come and go; the "flying terms" follow one another all too rapidly; in every few years the undergraduate element has completely changed; but the good old stock never seems to fail:

"Sed genus immortale manet, multosque per annos
Stat fortuna domûs, et avi numerantur avorum."

[1] Chandler's 'Life of Waynflete,' p. 94.

HOCKEN AND HUNKEN.

A TALE OF TROY.

BY "Q."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE PLOUGHING.

It is possible—though not, perhaps, likely—that had Cai obeyed his first impulse and pursued 'Bias down the valley, to overtake him, the two friends might after a few hot words have found reconciliation, or at least have patched up an honourable truce. As it was, 'Bias carried home a bitter sense of betrayal, supposing that he had left Cai master of the field. He informed Mrs Bowldler that he would dine and sup alone.

"Which the joint to-day is a goose," protested that lady; "and one more difficult to halve at short notice I don't know, for my part."

"You must do the best you can." He vouchsafed no other reply.

Mrs Bowldler considered this problem all the rest of the morning. "Palmerston," she asked, as she opened the oven door to baste the bird, "supposin' you were asked to halve a roast goose, how would you begin?"

"I'd say I wouldn't," answered Palmerston on brief reflection.

"But supposin' you *had* to?"

Palmerston reflected for many seconds. "I'd start by gettin' my knee on it," he decided.

Mrs Bowldler, albeit much vexed in mind, deferred solving the problem, and was rewarded with good-luck, as procrastinators too often are in this world.

Dinner-time arrived, but Captain Hocken did not. She served the goose whole and carried it in to Captain Hunken.

"Eh?" said 'Bias, as she removed the cover. "What about—about Cap'n Hocken?"

"He have not arrove."

'Bias ground his teeth. "Havin' dinner with *her!*" he told himself, and fell to work savagely to carve his solitary portion.

Having satisfied his appetite, he lit a pipe and smoked. But tobacco brought no solace, no charitable thoughts. While, as a matter of fact, Cai tramped the highroads, mile after mile, striving to deaden the pain at his heart, 'Bias sat puffing and let his wrath harden

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down into a fixed mould of resentment.

Dusk was falling when Cai returned. Mrs Bowldler, aware that something was amiss, heard his footsteps in the passage and presented herself.

"Which, having been detained, we might make an 'igh tea of it," she suggested, "and venture on the wing of a goose. Stuffing at this hour I would 'ardly 'int at, being onion and apt to recur." But Captain Hocken desired no more than tea and toast.

Mrs Bowldler was intelligently sympathetic, because Fancy had called early in the afternoon and brought some enlightenment.

"There's a row," said Fancy, and told about the sale of the parrot. "That Mrs Bosenna's at the bottom of it, as I've said all along," she concluded.

"Do you reelly think the bird has been talking?"

"I don't think: I know."

Mrs Bowldler pondered a moment. "Ho! well — she's a widow."

"I reckon," said Fancy, "if these two sillies are goin' to fall out over her and live apart, you'll be wantin' extra help. Two meals for every one — I hope they counted *that* before they started to quarrel."

"I'll not have another woman in the house," declared Mrs Bowldler, and repeated it for emphasis after the style of the great Hebrew writers. "Another woman in the house have I will not! What do *you* say, Palmerston?"

Palmerston, who had been on the edge of tears for some time, broke down and fairly blubbered.

"There's a boy!" exclaimed the elder woman. "Mention a little hard work and he begins to cry."

"I don't believe he's cryin' for that at all," spoke up Fancy. "Are you, Pammy dear?"

"Nun-nun-No-o!" sobbed Palmerston.

"He can't abide quarrellin'— that's what's the matter. . . . Ah, well!" sighed Fancy, and fell back on her favourite formula of resignation. "It'll be all the same a hundred years hence; when we mee-eet," she chanted, "when we mee-eet, when we mee-eet on that Beyewtiful Shore! *And* in the meantime we three have got to sit tight an' watch for an openin' to teach 'em that their little hands were never made. No talkin' outside, mind!"

"As if I should!" protested Mrs Bowldler, and added thoughtfully, "I often wonder what happens to widows."

"They marry again, mostly."

"I mean up there — on the Beautiful Shore, so to speak. They don't marry again, because the Bible says so: but how some *contry tomps* is to be avoided I don't see."

Chiefly through the loyalty of these three, some weeks elapsed before the breach of friendship between Captain Caius Hocken and Captain Tobias Hunken became a matter of common talk. Mr Rogers must have had an inkling; for the pair consulted him on all their business affairs and investments, and in two or

three ships their money had meant a joint influence on the shareholders' policy. Now, as they came to him separately, and with suggestions that bore no sign of concerted thought, so astute an adviser could hardly miss a guess that something was wrong. Nor did it greatly mend matters that each, on learning the other's wish upon this or that point where it conflicted with his own, at once made haste to yield. "If that's how 'Bias looks at it," Cai would say, "why o' course we'll make it so. I must have misunderstood him:" and 'Bias on his part would as promptly take back a proposal — "Cai thinks otherwise, eh? Oh, well that settles it! We haven't, as you might say, threshed it out together, but I leave details to him." "If you call this a detail——" "Yes, yes: leave it to Cai." Mr Rogers blinked, but asked no questions and kept his own counsel.

Mr Philp was more dangerous. (Who in Troy could keep Mr Philp for long off the scent of a secret?) But, as luck would have it, Cai in pure innocence routed Mr Philp at the first encounter.

It happened in this way. Towards the end of the first week of estrangement Cai, who bore up pretty well in the day time with the help of Mr Rogers, Barber Toy, and other gossips, began to find his evenings intolerably slow. He reasoned that autumn was drawing in, that the hours of darkness were lengthening, and that anyway albeit the weather had not turned chilly as yet, a fire would be companionable. He ordered a fire therefore (more work for Mrs Bowldler). But somehow, after a brief defeat, his *ennui* returned. Then of a sudden, one night at bedtime, he bethought him of the musical-box, and that John Peter Nanjulian needed hurrying-up.

Accordingly the next morning, as the church clock struck ten, found him climbing the narrow ascent to On the Wall: where, at the garden gate, he encountered Mr Philp in the act of leaving the house with a bulging carpet-bag.

"Eh? Good mornin', Mr Philp."

"Good mornin' to you, Cap'n Hocken." Mr Philp was hurrying by, but his besetting temptation held him to a halt. "How's Cap'n Hunken in these days?" he inquired.

"Nicely, thank you," answered Cai, using the formula of Troy.

"I ha'n't seen you two together o' late."

"No?" Cai, casting about to change the subject, let fall a casual remark on the weather, and asked, "What's that you're carryin', if one may make so bold?"

"It's—it's a little commission for John Peter," stammered Mr Philp. "Nothin' to mention."

He beat a hasty retreat down the hill.

"'Tis curious now," said Cai to John Peter, ten minutes later, "how your inquisitive man hates a question, just as

your joker can't never face a joke that goes against him. I met Philp, just outside, with a carpet-bag: and I no sooner asked what he was carryin' than he bolted like a hare."

"There's no secret about it, either," said John Peter. "He tells me that, for occupation, he has opened an agency for the Plymouth Dye and Cleanin' Works."

"And you've given him some clothes to be cleaned? Well, I don't see why he need be ashamed o' that."

"Well, I haven't, to tell you the truth. For my part, I like my clothes the better the more I'm used to 'em. But my sister's laid up with bronchitis."

"Miss Susan? . . . Nothin' serious, I hope?"

"She always get it in the fall o' the year. No, nothing serious. But the doctor says she must keep her bed for a week—and now she's *got* to. . . . There'll be a rumpus when she finds out," said John Peter resignedly, "for she don't like clean clothes any better than I do. But one likes to oblige a neighbour; and if he'd taken my trowsers 'twould ha' meant the whole household bein' in bed, which," concluded John Peter with entire simplicity, "would not only be awkward in itself but dangerous when only two are left of an old family."

Cai agreed, if he did not understand. He reclaimed his musical box—needless to say, John Peter had not yet engraved the plate—and carried it home, promising to return it when that adornment was ready. For the next night or two it soothed him somewhat while he smoked and meditated on the public duties soon to engage his leisure. For he had been co-opted a member of the School Board in room of Mr Rogers, resigned; and in Barber Toy's shop it was understood that he would be a candidate not only for the Parish Council to be elected before Christmas, but for a Harbour Commissionership to fall vacant in the summer of next year.

The notification of his appointment on the School Board reached him by post on the last Monday in September. Now, as it happened, the Technical Instruction Committee of the County Council had arranged to hold at Troy, some five days later, an Agricultural Demonstration, with competitions in ploughing, hedging, dry-walling, turfing, the splitting and binding of spars, &c.

Behold, now, on the morning of the Demonstration, Captain Caius Hocken, School Manager and therefore *ex officio* a Steward, taking the field in his Sunday best with a scarlet badge in his buttonhole,—"quite," declared Mrs Bowdler, "like a gentleman of the French Embassy as used frequent to take luncheon with us in the Square."

The morning was bright and clear; the sky a pale blue and almost cloudless, the season

> "Not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth
> Of trembling winter,"

and Cai walked with a light-

ness of spirit to which since the quarrel he had been a stranger. The Demonstration was to be held at Four Turnings, where the two roads that lead out of Troy and form a triangle with the sea for base, converge to an apex and branch off again into two County highways. The field lay scarcely a stone's-throw from this apex—that is to say, from the spot where the late Farmer Bosenna had ended his mortal career. It belonged in fact to Mrs Bosenna, and had been hired from her by the Technical Instruction Committee for a small sum; but Cai did not happen to know this, for the arrangement had been made some weeks ago, before his elevation to the School Board.

It was with a shock of surprise, therefore, that on passing the gate he found Mrs Bosenna close within, engaged in talk with two rosy-faced farmers; and moreover it brought a rush of blood to his face, for he had neither seen her nor heard from her since the fatal morning. There was, however, no way of retreat, and he stepped wide to avoid the group, lifting his hat awkwardly as he passed, not daring to meet the lady's eyes.

"Captain Hocken!" she called cheerfully.

"Ma'am?" Cai halted in confusion.

"Come here for a moment—that is, if it doesn't interrupt your duties—and be introduced to our two ploughing judges. Mr Widger of Callington, Mr Sam Nicholls of St Neot—Captain Hocken." Cai's cheeks in rosiness emulated those of the two men with whom he shook hands. "Captain Hocken," she explained to them, "takes a great interest in education."

For a moment it struck Cai that the pair, on hearing this, eyed him suspiciously; but his brain was in a whirl, and he might easily have been mistaken.

"Not at all," he stammered; "that is, I mean—I am new to this business, you see."

"You are a practical man, I hope, sir?" asked Mr Nicholls.

"I—I've spent the most part of my life at sea, if you'd count that bein' practical," said Cai modestly.

"To be sure I do," Mr Nicholls assented. "It's as practical as farmin', almost."

"In a manner o' speakin' it is," agreed Mr Widger grudgingly. "Men haven't all the same gifts. Now you'll hardly believe what happened to me the only time I ever took a sea trip."

"No?" politely queried Cai.

"I was sick," said Mr Widger, in a tone of vast reminiscent surprise.

"It *does* happen sometimes."

"Yes," repeated Mr Widger, "sick I was. It took place, so to speak, in Plymouth Sound: and you don't catch me tryin' the sea again."

"Now what," inquired Mr Nicholls, "might be your opinion about Labour Ex-

emption Certificates, Captain Hocken?"

Cai was gravelled. His alleged interest in education had not as yet extended to a study of the subject.

Mrs Bosenna came to the rescue. Talk about education (she protested) was the last thing she could abide. Before the ploughing began she wanted to show Captain Hocken some work the hedgers had been doing at the lower end of the field.

At that moment, too, the local secretary came running with word that the first teams were ready harnessed, and awaited the judges' preliminary inspection. Mr Widger and Mr Nicholls made their excuses, therefore, and hurried off to their duties.

"I have a bone to pick with you," said Mrs Bosenna, as she and Cai took their way leisurably across the field.

Cai groaned at thought of those unhappy letters.

But Mrs Bosenna made no allusion to the letters.

"You have not been near Rilla for weeks," she went on, reproachfully.

Cai glanced at her. "I thought — I was afraid you were offended," he said, his heart quickening its beat.

"Well, and so I was. To begin brawling as you did in a lady's presence — and two such friends as I'd always supposed you to be! It was shocking. Now, wasn't it?"

"It has made me miserable enough," pleaded Cai.

"And so it ought. . . . I don't know that I should be forgiving you now," added Mrs Bosenna demurely, "if it didn't happen that I wanted advice."

"*My* advice?" asks Cai incredulous.

"It's a business matter. Women, you know, are so helpless where business is concerned." (Oh, Mrs Bosenna!)

"If I can be of any help——" murmured Cai, somewhat astonished but prodigiously flattered.

"Hush!" she interrupted, lifting a quick eye towards the knap of the hill they had descended. "Isn't that Captain Hunken, up above? . . . Yes, to be sure it is, and he's turned to walk away just as I was going to call him." She glanced at Cai, and there was mischief in the glance. "I expect the ploughing has begun, and I won't detain either of you. . . . The business? We won't discuss it now. I have to wait here for Dinah, who is coming for company as soon as she's finished her housework. . . . To-morrow, then, if you have nothing better to do. Good-bye!"

He left her and climbed the hill again. He seemed to tread on air; and no doubt, when he reached the plateau where the ploughmen were driving their teams to and fro before the judges, with corrugated brows, compressed lips, eyes anxiously bent on the imaginary line of the furrow to be drawn, this elation gave his bearing a confidence which to the malignant or uncharitable might have presented itself as bumptiousness. He mingled with the

small group of *cognoscenti*, listened to their criticisms, and by-and-by, cocking his head knowledgeably on one side, hazarded the remark that "the fellow coming on with the roan and grey seemed to be missing depth in his effort to keep straight."

It was an innocent observation, uttered, maybe, a thought too dogmatically, but truly with no deeper intent than to elicit fresh criticism from an expert who stood close beside his elbow. But a voice behind him said, and carried its sneer—

"Maybe he ain't the only one hereabouts as misses depth."

Cai, with a grey face, swung about: he had recognised the voice. Some demon in him prompted the retort—

"Eh, 'Bias? Is that you?—and still takin' an interest in agriculture?"

The shaft went home. 'Bias's voice shook as he replied—

"I mayn't know much about education, at two minutes' notice; and I mayn't pretend to know much about ploughin' and wear a button in my coat to excuse it. But I reckon that for a pound a side I could plough you silly, Cai Hocken."

It was uttered in full hearing of some ten or twelve spectators, mostly townsmen of Troy; and these, turning their heads, for a moment not believing their ears, stared speechlessly at the two men whose friendship had in six months passed into a local byword. Cap'n Hocken and Cap'n Hunken—what, *quarrelling?* No, no—nonsense: it must be their fun.

But the faces of the pair told a different tale.

It was a stranger—a young farmer from two parishes away—who let off the first guffaw.

"A bet, naybours!—did 'ee hear *that?* Take him up, little man—he won't eat 'ee."

"I'll go ten shillin' myself, rather than miss it," announced another voice. "Ten shillin' on the bantam!"

"Get out with 'ee both," spoke up a citizen of Troy. "You don't know the men. 'Tisn't serious now—is it, Cap'n Hocken?—well as you're actin'——"

"Why not?" Cai stood, breathing hard, eyeing his adversary. "If *he* means it?"

"That's right! Cover his money!" cried an encouraging voice behind him.

The young farmer slapped his thigh, and ran off to the next group. "Hi, you fellows! A match!"

He shouted it. They turned about. "What is it, Bill Crago?"—for they read in his excited gestures that he had real news.

"The fun o' the fair, boys! Two ships' cap'ns offerin' to plough for a pound a side—if you ever!"

"Drunk?" suggested somebody.

"What's the odds if they be? 'Twill be all the better fun," answered Mr Crago. "No—far's one can tell they're dead sober. Come along and listen——" He hurried back and they after him.

"If he chooses to back out?" Cai was taunting 'Bias as the

crowd pressed around. So true is it that

"To be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain."

"Who wants to back out?" answered 'Bias sullenly.

"If a man insults me, I hold him to his word: either that or he takes it back."

"Quite right, Cap'n!" prompted a voice. "And he can't tell us he didn't say it, for I heard him!"

"I ain't takin' nothin' back." 'Bias faced about doggedly.

By this time, as their wits cleared a little, each was aware of his folly, and each would gladly have retreated from this public exhibition of it. But as the crowd increased, neither would be the first to yield and invite its certain jeers. Moreover, each was furiously incensed: anything seemed better than to be shamed by *him*, to give *him* a cheap triumph.

News of the altercation had spread. Soon two-thirds of the spectators were trooping to join the throng in the upper field, pressing in on the antagonists, jostling in their eagerness to catch a word of the dispute. The competitors in Class D were left to plough lonely furrows and finish them unapplauded. Young Mr Crago had run off meantime to secure the services of the two judges.

Now Mrs Bosenna, after waiting some ten minutes by the lower gate for Dinah (whose capital fault was unpunctuality), had lost patience and walked back towards Rilla to meet and reproach her. She had almost reached the small gate when she spied Dinah hurrying down the steep path to the highroad, and halted. Dinah, coming up, excused herself between catches of breath. She had been detained by the plucking of a fowl, and a feather—or, as you might call it, a fluff—had found its way into her throat. "Which," said she, "the way I heaved, mistress, is beyond belief."

Mrs Bosenna, having admonished her to be more careful in future, turned to retrace her steps to the field.

They reached it and climbed the slope crosswise. They had scarcely gained the edge of the upper plateau when Mrs Bosenna stopped short and gave a gasp. For at that moment there broke on their view, against the near sky-line, the figure of a man awkwardly turning a plough, behind a team of horses.

"Save us, mistress!" cried keen-eyed Dinah. "If it isn't——"

"It can't be!" cried Mrs Bosenna, almost in the same breath.

"It's Cap'n Hunken," said Dinah positively.

"But why? Dinah—why?"

"It's Cap'n Hunken," repeated Dinah. "The Lord knows why. If he's doin' it for fun, I never saw worse entry to a furrow in my life."

"Nor I. But what can it mean?" Mrs Bosenna, panting, paused at the sound of derisive cheering, not very distant.

The two women ran forward

a pace or two, until their gaze commanded the whole stretch of the upper slope. 'Bias, stolidly impelling his team—a roan and a rusty-black,—had, in the difficult process of steering the turn, been too closely occupied to let his gaze travel aside. He was off again: his stalwart back, stripped to braces and shirt, bent as he trudged in wake of the horses, clinging to the plough-tail, helplessly striving to guide them by the wavy parallel his last furrow had set.

Down the field, nearer and nearer, approached Cai, steering a team as helplessly. Ribald cheers followed him.

Mrs Bosenna, though quite at a loss to explain it, grasped the situation in less than a moment. She followed up 'Bias, keeping wide and running—yet not seeming to hasten—over the unbroken ground to the left.

"Captain Hunken!"

'Bias, throwing all his weight back on the plough-tail, brought his team to a halt and looked round. He was bewildered, yet he recognised the voice.

While he paused thus, Cai steadily advanced to meet and pass him. He was plainly at the mercy of his team—a grey and a brown, both of conspicuous height—and they were drawing the furrow at their own sweet will. But he, too, clung to the plough-tail and his lips were compressed, his eyes rigid, as he drew nearer, to meet and pass his adversary. He, likewise, had cast coat and waistcoat aside: his hat he had intrusted to an unknown backer. He saw nothing, as he came, but the line of the furrow he prayed to achieve.

"Captain Hocken!" She stepped forward hardily, holding up a hand, and Cai's team, too, came to a halt as if ashamed. "What — *what* is the meaning of this foolishness?"

"I've had enough, if *he* has," said Cai sheepishly, glancing past her and at 'Bias.

"I ain't doin' this for fun, ma'am," owned 'Bias. "Fact is, I'd 'most as lief steer a monkey by the tail."

"Then drop it this instant, the pair of you!"

'Bias scratched his head. "As for that, ma'am, I don't see how we can oblige. There's money on it—bets."

"There won't be money's worth left in my field, at the rate you're spoilin' it." She turned upon the two judges, who were advancing timidly to placate her, while the crowd hung back. "And now, Mr Nicholls—now, Mr Widger—I'd like to hear what *you* have to say to this!"

"'Tis a pretty old cauch, sure 'nough," allowed Mr Sam Nicholls, pushing up the brim of his hat on one side and scratching his head, while his eye travelled along the furrows. "Cruel!"

"And you permitted it! You, that might be supposed to have *some* knowledge o' farmin'!"

"Why, to be sure, ma'am," interposed Mr Widger; "we never reckoned as 'twould be so bad as all this. . . .

Young Bill Crago came to us with word as how these—these two gentlemen—had made a match, and he asked us to do the judgin' same as for the classes 'pon the bills——"

"And so you started them? And then, I suppose, you couldn't stop for laughin'?"

"Something like that, ma'am, *as* you say," Mr Widger confessed.

"And what sort o' speech will you make, down to County Council, when I send in my bill for damages?—you that complained to me, only this mornin', how the rates were goin' up by leaps and bounds! . . . As for these gentlemen," said Mrs Bosenna, turning on Cai and 'Bias with just a twinkle of mischief in her eyes, "I shall be at home to-morrow morning if they choose to call and make me an offer—unless, o' course, they prefer to do so by letter."

At this, Dinah put up her hand suddenly to cover her mouth. But Cai and 'Bias were in no state of mind to catch the double innuendo.

Having thus reduced the judges to contrition, and having proceeded to call forward the local secretary and to extort from him a long and painful apology, Mrs Bosenna wound up with a threat to bundle the whole Demonstration out of her field if she heard of any further nonsense, and, taking Dinah's arm, sailed off (so to speak) with all the trophies of war.

Cai and 'Bias walked away shamefacedly to seek out their bottleholders and collect each his hat, coat, and waistcoat.

"But which of ee's won?" demanded their backers.

"*Damn* who's won!" was 'Bias's answer: and he looked too dangerous to be pressed further.

A wager is a wager, however; and the judges' decision was clamoured for, with threats that, until it was given, the Agricultural Demonstration would not be suffered to proceed. Mr Sam Nicholls consulted hastily with Mr Widger, and announced the award as follows:—

"We consider Captain Hunken's ploughin' to be the very worst ploughin' we've ever seen. But we award him the prize all the same, because we don't consider Captain Hocken's ploughin' to be any ploughin' at all."

Solvuntur risu tabulæ—They can laugh too, at Troy!

CHAPTER XIX.—ROSES AND THREE-PER-CENTS.

Although in her rose-garden—the rose-garden proper—Mrs Bosenna grew all varieties of "Hybrid Perpetuals" (these ranked first with her, as best suited to the Cornish soil and climate), with such "Teas" and "Hybrid Teas" as took her fancy, and while she pruned these plants hard in spring, to produce exhibition blooms, sentiment or good taste had

forbidden her to disturb the old border favourites that lined the pathway in front of the house, or covered its walls and even pushed past the eaves to its chimneys. Some of these had beautified Rilla year by year for generations: the Provence cabbage-roses, for instance, in the border, the Crimson Damask and striped Commandant Beaurepaire; the moss-roses, pink and white, the china rose that bloomed on into January by the porch. These, with the Maréchal Niel by her bedroom window, the scented white Banksian that smothered the southern wall, and the climbing Devoniensis that nothing would stop or stay until its flag was planted on the very roof-ridge, had greeted her, an old man's bride, on her first home-coming. They had, in the mysterious way of flowers, soothed some rebellion of young blood and helped to reconcile her to a lot which, for a shrewd and practical damsel, was, after all, not unenviable. She had no romance in her, and was quite unaware that the roses had helped; but she took a sensuous delight in them, and this had started her upon her hobby. A success or two in local flower-shows had done the rest.

Now with a rampant climber such as Rosa Devoniensis it is advisable to cut out, each autumn, and clean remove some of the old wood; and this is no easy job when early neglect has allowed the plant to riot up and over the roof-thatch. Mrs Bosenna had a particular fondness for Devoniensis, and for the gipsy flush which separates it from other white roses as an unmistakable brunette. Yet she was sometimes minded to cut it down and uproot it, for the perverse thing would insist on flowering at its summit; and William Skin, sent aloft on ladders,—whether in autumn or spring to prune this riot, or in summer to reap blooms by the armful,—invariably did damage to the thatch.

Mrs Bosenna, then, gloved and armed with saw and secateurs, stood next morning by the base of the Devoniensis holding debate with herself.

The issue—that she would decide to spare the offender for yet another year—was in truth determined; for already William Skin had planted one ladder against the house-wall and had shuffled off to the barn for another, to be hoisted on to the slope of the thatch and there belayed with a rope around the chimney-stack. But she yet played with the resolve, taken last year, to be stern and order execution. She was still toying with it when the garden-gate clicked, and looking up she perceived Captain Cai.

"Ah! . . . Good morning, Captain Hocken!"

Cai advanced along the pathway and gravely doffed his hat. "Good morning, ma'am—if I don't intrude?"

"Not at all. In fact, I was expecting you."

"Er — on which errand, ma'am?"

"—Which?" echoed Mrs

Bosenna, as if she did not understand.

"Shall we take the more painful business first?" suggested Cai humbly. "If indeed it has not—er—wiped out the other. The damage done yesterday to your field, ma'am——"

"Have you brought Captain Hunken along with you?" asked Mrs Bosenna, interrupting him.

"No, ma'am. He will be here in half an hour, sharp." Cai consulted his watch.

"You have stolen a march on him, then?" she smiled.

Cai flushed. "No, again, ma'am. Er—in point of fact we tossed up which should call first."

"Then," said she calmly, "we'll leave that part of the business until he arrives; though, since it concerns you both, I can't see why you did not bring him along with you. Do you know," she added with admirable simplicity, "it has struck me once or twice of late that you and Captain Hunken are not the friends you were?"

Still Cai stared, his face mantling with confusion. This woman was an enigma to him. Surely she must understand? Surely she must have received that brace of letters to which she evaded all allusion? And here was she just as blithely postponing all allusion to yesterday's offence.

But no; not quite, it seemed; for she continued—

"I cannot think why you two should challenge one another as you did yesterday, and make sillies of yourselves before a lot of farmers. It—it humiliates you."

"We were a pair of fools," conceded Cai.

"What men cannot see somehow," she went on angrily, "is that it doesn't end there. That kind of thing humiliates a woman; especially when—when she happens to be cast on her own resources and it is everything to her to find a man she can trust."

Mrs Bosenna threw into these words so much feeling that Cai in a moment forgot self. His awkwardness fell from him as a garment.

"You may trust me, ma'am. Truly you may. Tell me only what I can do."

At this moment William Skin—a crab-apple of a man, whose infirmity of deafness had long since reduced all the world for him to a vain tolerable show, in which so much went unexplained that nothing caused surprise — came stumbling around the corner of the house with a waggon-rope and a second ladder, which he proceeded to rest alongside the first one; showing the while no recognition of Cai's presence, even by a nod.

"I want you," said Mrs Bosenna, "to invest a hundred pounds for me. Oh!"—as Cai gave a start and glanced at Skin—"we may talk before him: he's as deaf as a haddock."

"A hundred pounds?" queried Cai, still in astonishment.

"Yes; it's a sum I happen to have lyin' idle. At this

moment it's in the Bank, on deposit, where they give you something like two-and-a-half only: and in the ordinary way I should put it into Egyptian three per cents, or perhaps railways. My poor dear Samuel always had a great opinion of Egypt, for some reason. He used to say how pleasant it was in church to hear the parson readin' about Moses and the bulrushes and the plague of frogs and suchlike, and think he had money invested in that very place, and how different it was in these days. Almost in his last breath he was beggin' me to promise to stick to Egyptians, or at any rate to something at three per cent and gilt-edged: because, you see, he'd always managed all the business and couldn't believe that women had any real sense in money affairs. . . . I didn't make any promise, really; though in a sort of respect to his memory I've kept on puttin' loose sums into that sort of thing. Three per cent is a silly rate of interest, when all's said and done: but of course the poor dear thought he was leavin' me all alone in the world, with no friend to advise. . . ."

"I see," said Cai, his heart beginning to beat fast. "And it's different now?"

"I—I was hopin' so," said Mrs Bosenna softly.

Cai glanced at the back of William Skin, who had started to hum—or, rather, to croon—a tuneless song while knotting a rope to the second ladder. No: it was impossible to say what he wished to say in the presence of William Skin, confound him! Skin's deafness, Skin's imperturbability, might have limits. . . .

"You wish me to advise you?" he controlled himself to ask.

"No, I don't. I wish you—if you'll do me the favour—just to take the money and invest it without consultin' me. It's—well, it's like the master in the Bible—the man who gave out the talents. . . . Only don't wrap it in a napkin!" She laughed. "I don't even want to be told *what* you do with the money. I'd rather not be told, in fact. I want to trust you."

"Why?"

She laughed again, this time more shyly. "'Trust is proof,'" she answered, quoting the rustic adage. "You have given me some right to make that proof, I think?"

Ah—to be sure—the letters! She must, of course, have received his letter, along with 'Bias's, though this was her first allusion to it. . . . Cai's brain worked in a whirl for some moments. She was offering him a test; she was yielding upon honest and prudent conditions; she was as good as inviting him to win her. . . . To do him justice, he had never—never, at any rate, consciously—based his wooing on her wealth. For aught he cared, she might continue to administer all she possessed. The comforts of Rilla Farm may have helped to attract him, but hers had been from the first the true spell.

He did not profess any know-

ledge of finance. A return of four per cent on his own modest investments contented him, and he left these to Mr Rogers.

"Ah!"

His mind had caught, of a sudden, at a really brilliant idea.

"I accept," said he firmly, looking Mrs Bosenna hard in the eyes, and her eyes sank under his gaze.

"Hi! Heads!" sang out a voice, and simultaneously the ladder which William Skin had been hauling aloft, came crashing down and struck the flagged path scarcely two yards away.

A second later Cai had Mrs Bosenna in his arms. "You are not hurt?" he gasped.

She disengaged herself with a half-hysterical laugh. "Hurt? Am I? . . . No, of course I am not."

"The damned rope slipped," growled William Skin in explanation from his perch on the ladder under the eaves.

"Slipped?" Cai ran to the rope and examined it. "Of course it slipped, you lubber!" He stepped back on the pathway and spoke up to Skin as he would have talked on shipboard to a blundering seaman in the cross-trees. "Ain't a slip-knot *made* to slip; and when a man's fool enough to tie one in place of a hitch——"

He cast off the rope, bent it around the rung with, as it seemed, one turn of the hand, and with a jerk had it firm and true.

"Make way, up there!" he called.

"You're never going to—to risk yourself," protested Mrs Bosenna.

"Risk myself? Lord, ma'am, for what age d'ye take me?" Cai caught up the slack of the rope and hitched it taut over his shoulder. He was rejuvenated. He made a spring for the ladder, and went up it much as twenty years ago he would have swarmed up the ratlines. "Make yourself small," he commanded, as Skin, at imminent risk of falling, drew to one side before his onset. Cai was past him in a jiffy, over the eaves, balancing himself with miraculous ease on the slippery thatch. "Now ease up the ladder!"

He had anchored himself by pure trick of balance, and was pulling with a steady hand almost as soon as Skin, collecting his wits, could reach out to fend the ladder off from crushing the edge of the eaves. Ten seconds later, by seaman's sleight of foot, he had gained a second anchorage half-way up the slope, had gathered up all the slack of the rope into a seaman's coil, and with a circular sweep of the arm had flung it deftly around the chimney. The end, instead of sliding down to his hand, hitched itself among the thorns of the rampant Devoniensis. Did this daunt him? It checked him for an instant only. The next, he had balanced himself for a fresh leap, gained the roof-ridges, and, seated astride of it, was hauling up the ladder, hand over fist, close to the chimney-base.

The marvel was, the close

thatch showed no trace of having been trampled or disturbed.

"Darn the feller, he's as ajjile as a cat!" swore William Skin.

"Pass up the clippers, you below," Cai commanded, forgetting that the man was deaf. "If your mistress'll stand back in the path a bit, I'll pick out the shoots one by one and hold 'em up for her to see, so's she can tell me which to cut away."

"You'll scratch your hands to ribbons," Mrs Bosenna warned him.

"'Tisn't worth while comin' down for a pair of hedgin' gloves. . . . I say, though—I've a better notion! 'Stead of lettin' this fellow run riot here around the chimney-stack, why not have him down and peg him horizontal, more or less, across and along the thatch, where he can be seen?"

"Capital!" she agreed. "He'd put out more than twice the number of blooms too. They do always best when laid lateral."

"He'll come down bodily with a little coaxin'. The question is how to peg him when he's down?"

"Rick-spars," answered Mrs Bosenna promptly. "The small kind. There's dozens in the waggon-house loft." She signalled to William Skin to come down, bawled an order in his ear, and despatched him to fetch a score or so.

"Hullo!" cried Cai, who, being unemployed for the moment, had leisure to look around and enjoy the view from the roof-ridge. "If it isn't 'Bias comin' up the path! . . . Hi! 'Bias!" he hailed boyishly, in the old friendly tone.

'Bias, stooping to unlatch the gate, heard the call which descended, as it were, straight down from heaven, and gazed about him stupidly. He saw Mrs Bosenna in the pathway, advancing a step or two to make him welcome. She halted and laughed, with a glance up towards the roof. 'Bias's eyes slowly followed hers.

"Lord!" he muttered, "what made ye masthead him up there? . . . Been misbehavin', has he? 'Tis the way I've served 'prentices afore now."

"On the contrary, he has been behaving beautifully——"

"Here, 'Bias!" called down Cai again. "Heft along the tall ladder half a dozen yards to the south'ard, and stand by to help. I'm bringin' down this plaguy rose-bush, and I'll take some catchin' if I slip with it."

"'Who ran and caught him when he fell?' 'His 'Bias,'" quoted Mrs Bosenna. "He has been doin' wonders up there, Captain Hunken. But if I were you—a man of your weight——"

"I reckon," said 'Bias, stepping forward and seizing the ladder, which he lifted as though it had been constructed of bamboo, "I han't forgot *all* I learnt o' reefin' off the Horn." He planted the ladder and had mounted it in a jiffy. "Now, then, what's the programme?" he demanded.

"You see this rose? Well, I got to collect it—I've tried the main stem, and it'll bend all right,—and then I got to slide down to you. After that we've to peg it out somewheres above the eaves, as madam gives orders. See?"

"I see. When you're ready, slide away."

Just then William Skin came hurrying back with an armful of rick-spars, and within ten minutes the two rivals were hotly at work—yet cheerfully, intelligently, as though misunderstanding had never been, —clipping out dead wood from the rose-bush, layering it, pegging it, driving in the spars, — while Mrs Bosenna called directions, and William Skin gazed, with open mouth.

"This is better than ploughin', ma'am?" challenged Cai in his glee.

"So much better," agreed the widow, smiling up, "that I've almost a mind to forgive the pair of you."

"But I won't ask you to stay for dinner to-day," she said later, when the tangled mass of the Devoniensis had been separated, shoot from shoot, and pegged out to the last healthy-looking twig, and the two men stood, flushed but safe, on the pathway beside her. She stole a confidential little glance at Cai. "For I understand from Captain Hooken that you prefer to make your excuses separately. I have already forgiven *him:* and it's only fair to give Captain Hunken his turn."

Who less suspicious than Cai? Had he been suspicious at all, what better reassurance than the sly pressure of her hand as he bade her good-day? . . . Poor 'Bias!

Once past the gate, and out of sight, Cai felt a strange desire to skip!

. . . . . .

"Well, mistress, you are a bold one, I must say!" commented Dinah that night by the kitchen fire, where Mrs Bosenna enjoyed a chat and, at this season of the year, a small glass of hot brandy-and-water, with a slice of lemon in it, before going to bed.

"I don't see where the boldness comes in," said the widow. She was studying the fire, and spoke inattentively.

"Two hundred pounds!"

"Eh? . . . There's no risk in that. You may say what you like of Captain Hooken or of Captain Hunken; but they're honest as children. The money's as safe with them as in the bank."

"Well, it do seem to me a dashin' and yet a very cold-blooded way of choosin' a man. Now, if I was taken with one——"

"Well?" prompted Mrs Bosenna, as Dinah paused.

"Call me weak, but I couldn't help it. I should throw myself straight at his head, an' ask him to trample me under his boots!"

"A nice kind of husband you'd make of him then!" said her mistress scornfully.

"I know, I know," agreed Dinah. "I've no power o' resistance at all, an' I daresay

the Almighty has saved me a lifetime o' trouble. 'Twould ha' been desperet pleasant at the time though." She sighed. "But to give two men a hundred pound each, an' choose the one that manages it best——"

"Worst," corrected Mrs Bosenna. "You ninny!" she went on with sovereign contempt. "Do you really suppose I'd marry a man that could handle my money, or was vain enough to suppose he could?"

"O—oh!" gasped Dinah as she took enlightenment. . . . "But two hundred pounds is a terrible sum to spend in findin' out which o' two men is the bigger fool. Why not begin wi' the one you like best, and find out first if he's foolish enough to suit?"

"Because," answered Mrs Bosenna, turning meditative eyes again upon the fire, "I don't happen to know which I like best."

"Then you can't be in love," declared foolish Dinah.

"Sensible women ain't; not until afterwards. . . . Now, which would you advise me to marry?"

"Captain Hunken." Dinah's answer was prompt. "He's that curt. I like a man to be curt; he makes it so hard for 'ee to say no. Besides which, as you might say, that parrot of his did break the ice in a manner of speakin'."

"Dinah, I'm ashamed of you."

"Well, mistress, natur' is natur': and we knows what we can't help knowin'."

"That's true," Mrs Bosenna agreed. It was her turn to sigh.

"Cap'n Hunken's the man," repeated Dinah. She nodded her head on it and paused. "Though, if you ask my opinion, Cap'n Hocken 'd make the better husband."

"It's difficult."

"Ay. . . . For my part, I don't know what you want with a husband at all."

"Nor I," said Mrs Bosenna, still gazing into the fire.

"At the best 'tis a risk."

Mrs Bosenna sighed again. "If it weren't, where'd be the fun?"

CHAPTER XX.—A NEWSPAPER PARAGRAPH.

Mr Rogers enjoyed his newspaper. To speak more accurately, he enjoyed several; and one of Fancy's duties—by no means the least pleasant or the least onerous—was to read to him daily the main contents of 'The Western Morning News,' 'The Western Daily Mercury,' and 'The Shipping Gazette'; and on Thursdays from cover to cover—at a special afternoon *séance*—'The Troy Herald,' with its weekly bulletin of more local news.

"What's the items this week?" asked Mr Rogers, puffing at a freshly lit pipe and settling himself down to listen.

Fancy opened the paper at

its middle sheet, folded it back and scanned it.

"Here we are. 'If you want corsets, go to——' no, that's an advertisement. 'Troy Christian Endeavour. Under the auspices of the above-named flourishing society——'"

"Skip the Christian Endeavour."

"Very well. The next is 'Wesley Guild. A goodly company met this week to hear the Rev. J. Bates Handcock on "Gambling: its Cause and Cure." The reverend gentleman is always a favourite at Troy——'"

"He's none of mine, anyway. Skip the Wesley Guild."

"Right-o! 'On Wednesday last, in spite of counter attractions, much interest was testified by those who assembled in the Institute Hall to hear Mr Trudgeon, lately returned from the United States, on the Great Canyon of Colorado, illustrated with lantern slides. The lecturer in a genial manner, after personally conducting his audience across the Great Continent——'"

"Damn," said Mr Rogers. "Get on to the drunks. Ain't there any?"

"Seems not. How will this do?

'Report says that Monday's Agricultural Demonstration—a full report of which will be found in another column—was not without its comic relief, beloved of dramatists. On dit that——'"

"On what?"

"Dit. Misprint, perhaps—

'On dit that two highly respected sons of the brine, recently settled in our midst, and one of whom has recently been elected to teach our young ideas how to shoot, were so fired with emulation by the ploughing in Class C as to challenge one another then and there to a trial of prowess, much to the entertainment of our agricultural friends. The stakes were for a considerable amount, and the two heroes who had elected to plough something more solid than the waves, quickly found themselves the observed of all observers. Rumour, that lying jade, hints at a lady in the case. Certain it is that the pair, whose names have of late been syn—been sy—nonymous—with,'—

"—O Lor'! here's a heap of it, master!"

"Skip the long syllables an' get on."

"H'm—m—

'—acquitted themselves to the astonishment of the judges, and of everybody else in the field. Search out the lady, as our Gallic neighbours say.'"

—"Who's Gallic?"

"Don't know. Ask Shake Benny. He supplies the Troy Notes to the 'Herald.'"

"Oh, does he?"

"Yes: he gets his gossip off Philp, and dresses it up. That's how it's done. Philp has a nose like a ferret's: but he was unfort'nit in his edu-

cation. You may trust Philp to get at the facts—leastways you can trust him for gossip: but he can't dress anything up. . . . Why, what's the matter with the child?"

Fancy Tabb never laughed: and this was the queerer because she had a sense of humour beyond her years. Though by no means a gleeful child she could express glee naturally enough: but a joke merely affected her with silent convulsive twitchings, as though the risible faculty struggled somewhere within her but could not bring the laugh to birth.

These spasms of mirth, whatever had provoked them, were cut short—and her explanations too—by a heavy footstep on the stairs.

"Cap'n Hunken!" she announced, and went to open the door. "Most like he wants to talk business with you same as Cap'n Hocken did this morning, and I'd better make myself scarce. That's the silly way they've taken to behave, 'stead of callin' together."

"Ay, you're sharp, missy," said her master. "But 'twon't be the same arrand this time, as it happens: so you're wrong for once."

Fancy, if she heard, did not answer, for 'Bias by this time had reached the landing without. She opened to him. "Good afternoon, sir."

"Afternoon, missy. I saw your father in the shop, and he told me to walk up. Mr Rogers disengaged?"

"Ay, Cap'n—walk in, walk in!" said Mr Rogers from his chair. "What is it to-day? Business? or just a pipe and a chat?"

"Well, it's business," allowed 'Bias with a glance at the girl. "But I'll light a pipe over it, if ye don't mind."

"And I'll fit and make tea for you both," said Fancy. "It's near about time."

She vanished and closed the door behind her. 'Bias found a chair, seated himself, and filled his pipe very slowly and thoughtfully. Mr Rogers waited.

"The business that brings me—" 'Bias paused, struck a match and lit up—"ain't quite the ord'nary business."

"No?"

"No." For a few seconds 'Bias appeared to be musing. "In fact you might call it a—a sort o' flutter. That's the word — ain't it? — when you take a bit o' money and play venturesome with it, against your usual habits."

"Ay." Mr Rogers looked at him sharply.

"When I say venturesome," continued 'Bias, "you'll understand I don't mean foolhardy. . . . Nothin' o' the sort. I want to hear o' something tolerably safe, into which a man might put a small sum he happened to have lyin' about."

"What sort of investment?"

"Ay, that's just what I want you to tell me. Ten per cent, we'll say, an' no more'n a moderate risk. . . . I reckoned as a man like you might know, maybe, o' half a dozen things o' the sort."

"What's the amount?" Mr

Rogers's eyes that had opened wide for a moment narrowed themselves upon him in a curiosity that hid some humour.

"Put it at a hundred pound."

"Oh!—er—I mean, is that all?"

"You see," explained 'Bias. "You mustn' run away wi' the notion that I ain't satisfied as things are. Four and five per cent—and that's what you get for me—does best in the main. I can live within the income and sleep o' nights. But once in a way——"

"Ay," interrupted Mr Rogers, "and more especially when *it's to oblige a friend.*"

'Bias withdrew the pipe from his mouth and stared. "You're a clever one, too! . . . Well, and I don't mind your knowin'. 'Tis a relief, in a way: for now you know I'm pleased enough with your dealin's on my own account."

"Thank 'ee. I'm not askin' no names."

"As to that, I'd rather not mention the name, either. But I'd be very glad o' your advice: for 'tis important to me, in a way o' speakin'!"

Mr Rogers nodded. "If that's so," said he, "you must give me a little time to think. There's mortgages, o' course: and there's deals to be done in shipping: and there's money-lendin'—though you'd object to that, maybe. . . . Anyway, you come to me to-morrow, and I may have something to propose."

"Thank 'ee. I take that as friendly."

"Right." Mr Rogers let drop a trembling half-paralysed hand towards the newspaper which lay on the floor beside his chair. "Would ye mind——"

'Bias stepped forward and picked it up for him.

"Thank-ee. No: I want you to keep it. . . . I'm goin' to do a thing that's friendlier yet: though it be a risk. Open the paper at the middle sheet—right-hand side, an' look out a column headed 'Troy News.' . . . Got it?"

"Half a moment—Yes, 'Troy News'—here we are!"

"Now cast your eye down the column till you come 'pon a par about last Monday's Agricultural Demonstration."

"The devil!" swore 'Bias. "You don't mean to say——"

"'Course I do. Everything gets into the papers nowadays. . . . You'll find it spicy."

'Bias found the paragraph and started to read, with knitted brows. Its journalistic style held him puzzled for fully half a minute. Then he ejaculated "Ha!" and snorted. After another ten seconds he snorted again and exploded some bad words—some very bad words indeed.

"Thought I'd warn you to be careful," said Mr Rogers. "You don't take it amiss, I hope? In a little place like this there's eyes about all the time—an' tongues."

"I'd like to find the joker who wrote it?" breathed 'Bias, the paper trembling between his hands.

"I can't tell you who *wrote* it," said the ship-chandler;

"but I can give a pretty close guess who's responsible for it: and that's Philp."

"Philp?"

"Mind ye, I say 'tis but a guess."

"I'll Philp him!"

"Well, he's no fav'rite o' mine," said Mr Rogers grinning. "He's too suspicious for me, and I hate a man to be suspicious. . . . But he's the man I suspect."

"Where does he live?"

"Union Place—two flights o' steps below John Peter Nanjulian's—left-hand side as you go up. But you can't have it out with him on suspicion only."

"Can't I?" said 'Bias grimly. "I'll ask him plain 'yes' or 'no.' If he says 'yes,' I'll know what to do, and you may lay I'll do it."

"But if he says 'no'?"

"Then I'll call him a liar," promised 'Bias without a moment's indecision. "That'll touch him up, I should hope. . . . *Where* did you say he lives?"

At this moment there came a knock at the door and Fancy entered with the tea-tray.

"If you'd really like a talk with him," said Mr Rogers, blinking, "maybe you'd best let the child here take you to his house. . . . Eh, missy? Cap'n Hunken tells me as how he'd like to pay a call 'pon Mr Philp, up in Union Place."

"Now?" asked Fanny.

"The sooner the better," answered 'Bias, crushing 'The Troy Herald' between his hands.

Fancy's hands, disencumbered of the tea-tray, began to twitch violently. "Very well, master," was all she said, however; and with that she left the room to fetch her hat and small cloak.

"I'd advise you to tackle Philp gently," was Mr Rogers's warning as soon as the pair were alone. "Not that I've any likin' for the man: but the point is, you've no evidence. He'll tell you—and, likely enough, with truth—as he never act'ally wrote what's printed."

"You leave him to me," said 'Bias grimly, gulping his tea and preparing to sally forth.

"An' you might remember to leave the child outside. If a lady's name is to be handled in the discussion, you understand. . . . Besides which, witnesses are apt to be awk'ard. Two's the safe number when there's a delicate point to be cleared up."

Fancy reappeared and announced herself ready. 'Bias caught up his hat. . . . Left to himself, Mr Rogers lay back in his chair and chuckled. He did not care two straws for Mr Philp, or for what might happen to him. His mind was off on quite another train of thought.

"I wonder what the woman's game is? 'A hundred pound lyin' idle'—and Hocken around with the same tale this forenoon. . . . Ten per cent, and at a moderate risk. . . . She's shrewd, too, by all accounts. . . . Damme, if this isn't a queer cross-runnin' world! A woman like that, if I'd had the luck to meet her a three-

four years ago—before *this* happened!" . . . He eyed his palsied hand as it reached out, shaking, for the tea-cup.

"When we get to the door," said 'Bias heavily, as he and Fancy turned out of the street into the narrow entry of Union Place, "you're to step back and run away home."

"No fear," she assured him. "I'm doin' you a favour, an' don't you forget it."

"But you can't come inside with me."

"*That's* all right. Nobody said as I wanted to, in my hearin'. I can see all I want to see. There's a flight o' steps runnin' up close outside the window."

She pointed it out and quite candidly indicated the point at which she proposed to perch herself. "And there's another window at the back," she added: "so's you can see all that's happenin' inside."

"Better fit you ran away home," he repeated.

"You can't *make* me," retorted Fancy. "Unless, o' course, you choose to use force, here in broad daylight. As a friend of mine said, only the other day," she went on, snatching at a purple patch from 'Pickerly,' "the man as would lift his hand against a woman deserves whatever can be said of him. Public opinion will condemn him in this life, and, in the next, worms are his portion. So there!"

"I dunno what you're talkin' about," said 'Bias, preoccupied with the thought of coming vengeance. "Who's meanin' to lift his hand against a woman?"

"Well, mind you don't, that's all!"

She left him standing on the doorstep, and skipped away up the steps. Having reached a point which commanded a view over the blinds of Mr Philp's front window, she gave a glance into the room, and at once her arms and legs started to twitch as though in the opening movement of some barbaric war-dance.

'Bias, still inattentive, took no heed of these contortions. After a moment's pause he rapped sharply on the door with the knob of his walking stick, then boldly lifted the latch and strode into the passage.

On his right the door of the front parlour stood ajar. He thrust it wide open and entered. And, as he entered, a female figure arose from a chair on the far side of the room.

"I—I beg your pardon, ma'am!" stammered 'Bias, falling back a pace.

"Polly wants a kiss!" screamed a voice. It did not seem to proceed from the lady. . . . Somehow, too, it was strangely familiar. . . . 'Bias stared wildly about him.

At the same moment, and just as his eyes fell on the parrot-cage on the table, the lady—But was it a lady? Heavens! what did it resemble—this figure in female attire?

"Drat your bird! He won't say no worse! And this is the third mornin' I've sat temptin' him!"

Mr Philp—yes, it was Mr

Philp—in black merino frock, Paisley shawl and ribboned cap on which a few puce-coloured poppies nodded—Mr Philp, with a handful of knitting, and a ball of worsted trailing at his feet. But it is impossible to construct a sentence which would do justice to Mr Philp as he loomed up and swam into ken through 'Bias's awed surmise; and the effort shall be abandoned.

Mr Philp slowly unwound the woollen wrap that had swathed his beard out of sight.

"Clever things, birds," said Mr Philp, and his voice seemed to regain its identity as the folds of the bandage dropped from him. "I wonder whether shavin' would help! . . . I don't like to be beat."

'Bias, who had come with that very intent, lifted a hand—but let it fall again. No, he could not!

"Good Lord!" he ejaculated, and fled from the house.

Outside, Fancy—who had seen all—was executing a fandago on the step.

"Help!" she called, taunting him. "*Who* talked o' liftin' a hand against a woman?"

CHAPTER XXI.—THE AUCTION.

One result of the paragraph in 'The Troy Herald' was to harden the two friends' estrangement just at the moment when it promised to melt. Troy, with its many amenities, has a deplorable appetite for gossip; and to this appetite the contention of Captain Hocken and Captain Hunken for Mrs Bosenna's hand gave meat and drink. (There was, of course, no difficulty in guessing what Mr Shake Benny would have called "the *inamorata's* identity.") Malicious folk, after their nature, assumed the pair to be in quest of her money. The sporting ones laid bets. Every one discussed the item with that frankness which is so characteristic of the little town, and so engaging when you arrive at knowing us, though it not infrequently disconcerts the newcomer. Barber Toy—having Cai at his mercy next morning, with a razor close to his throat—heartily wished him success.

"Not," added Mr Toy, "that I bear any ill-will to Cap'n Hunken. But I back a shaved chin on principle, for the credit of the trade."

A sardonic and travelled seaman, waiting his turn in the corner, hereupon asked how he managed when it came to the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race.

"I'll tell you," answered Mr Toy. "I wasn't at Oxford myself—*nor* at Cambridge; and for years I'd back one or 'nother, 'cordin' to the newspapers. But that isn't a *satisfactory* way. When you're dealin' with an honest event—*honest*, mind you—as goes on year after year between two parties both ekally set on winnin', the only way to get

real satisfaction is to pick your fancy an' go on backin' it. That gives ye a different interest altogether, like with Liberal or Conservative at a General Election. If you don't win this time, you look forward to next. . . . Well, one day Mr Philp here came into the shop wearin' a dark-blue tie, and says I, 'You're Oxford.' 'Am I?' says he—'It's the first I've ever heard of it.' 'You're Oxford,' says I; 'and I'm Cambridge, for half a crown.' Odd enough, Cambridge won that year by eight lengths."

"I wonder you have the face to tell this story," put in Mr Philp.

The barber grinned. "Well, I thought as we'd both settled 'pon our fancy, in a neighbourly way. But be dashed if, soon after the followin' Christmas, Mr Philp didn't send his tie to the wash, and it came back any blue you pleased. 'Make it one or t'other—*I* don't care,' said I: and he weighed the choice so long, bein' a cautious man, that we missed to make up any bet at all. If you'll believe me, that year they rowed a dead heat."

"Very curious," commented Cai.

"But that isn' the end," continued the barber. "Next year he'd washed his neck-tie again, and that 'twas Cambridge he couldn' dispute. So we put on another half-crown, and Oxford won by two lengths. . . . 'Twas a pity I could never induce him to bet again, for his tie went on getting Cambridger and Cambridger, while Oxford won four years out o' five."

"If you believe there was any honesty in it!" said Mr Philp. "'Twas only my suspicious natur' as saved me."

The whole town, indeed, was watching the rivals, and with an open interest very difficult to resent. Nay, since it was impossible to tell every second man in the street to mind his own business, Cai and 'Bias accepted the publicity perforce and turned their resentment upon one another.

They continued, of course, to live apart, and Mrs Bowldler soon learned to avoid playing the intermediary, even to the extent of suggesting (say) some concerted action over the coal supplies. After the first fortnight no messages passed between them—

> "They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
> Like cliffs that had been rent asunder."

If they met, in shop or roadway, they nodded, but exchanged no other greeting. They never met at Rilla Farm. How it was agreed I know not, though Mrs Bosenna must have contrived it somehow; but they now prosecuted their wooing openly on alternate days. Sunday she reserved for what Sunday ought to be—a day of rest.

"The artfulness!" exclaimed Mrs Bowldler on making discovery of this arrangement. "But the men are no match for us, my dear"—this to Fancy—"an' the oftener they

marry us the cleverer they leave us."

"Then 'tis a good job Henry the Eighth wasn' a woman," commented Fancy.

"There was some such case in the Scriptures, if you'll remember; and it says that last of all the woman died also. If she did, you may be sure as 'twasn't till she chose."

"I heard Mr Rogers say t'other day, 'Never marry a widow unless her first husband was hanged.'"

"Pray let us change the subjeck," said Mrs Bowldler hastily.

"Why? . . . What did Mr Bowldler die of? I've often meant to ask," said Fancy, "and then again I've wondered sometimes if there ever was any such person."

"There *was* such a person." Mrs Bowldler half-closed her eyes in dreamy reminiscence. "Further than that I would not like to commit myself."

"He's dead, then?"

"He was a fitter in a ladies' tailorin', and naturally gay by temperament. It led to misunderstandin's. . . . Dead? No, not that I am aware of. For all I know he's still starrin' it somewhere in the provinces."

She protested that for the moment she must drop the subject, which invariably affected her with palpitations; but promised to return to it in confidence when she felt stronger.

Throughout these days, however, and for many days to come, she discoursed at large on the diplomacy of widows; warning Palmerston to shape his course in avoidance of them. And that budding author—who had already learnt to take his good things where he found them—boldly transferred her warnings to the pages of 'Pickerley,' which thereby arrived at resembling 'Pickwick' in one respect if in no other.

From these generalities she would hark back, at shortest notice, to the practical present.

"It behoves us — seein' as how a tempory cloud has descended between these two establishments—it behoves us, I say, to watch out for its silver lining in one form or another. Which talking of silver reminds me of electro, and I'll ask you, Palmerston, if that's the way to leave a mustard-pot and call yourself an indoor male?"

(To be continued.)

OLD ULSTER MEMORIES.

In our early days the recollections of '98 were still keen and vivid. Perhaps we heard so much of them because we had relatives who had espoused different sides in that disastrous struggle. It was frequently styled the League of the Bonnet and the Brogue, because of the remarkable and short-lived confederacy which the Presbyterian farmers and weavers of Ulster entered into with the Catholic masses of the south to overthrow the British domination and set up in place thereof an independent Irish republic. A favourite toast at revolutionary gatherings was, "May the skin of old Geordie [George III.] be a drumhead to rouse the Republicans to arms," and the would-be liberators promised the total abolition of rent, tithes, taxes, and some other vexatious imposts. Tobacco in particular, it was promised, should be reduced to one-fourth of the existing price; and whilst the whole machinery of the law —judges, lawyers, and magistrates—was to be summarily swept away, prompt and equal justice was to be administered gratis and to all alike.

An uncle of ours had in his youth openly avowed his sympathy with some at least of the republican tenets, though as far as I am aware he had never taken the United Irishman's oath or allied himself in any active fashion with the revolutionary party. A younger brother of his was going out to seek his fortune in the New World. He sailed from Liverpool, and the ship which had the young emigrant on board was becalmed off the Antrim coast, almost within sight of his home. His brother rowed out to take a last leave of him on board, and on his return to land was arrested as soon as he set foot ashore and committed to the safe custody of Carrickfergus jail. He was charged with having been engaged in an examination of the coast to discover a convenient spot where the French, whose coming was then hourly expected, might effect a landing. All his protests and explanations of the entirely harmless, and indeed commendable, nature of his boating expedition were disregarded, and he was kept in durance vile for nearly a year, till quiet had once more been restored. His captivity was not, however, rendered unnecessarily harsh, and he was even supplied with a valet in the person of Thanny M'Mullan, the hangman, who at an earlier period of his career had had his ears cropped for perjury, the loss of those outward appendages having, in former days, been the statutory penalty for that offence.

On the other hand, a more distant relative of ours, an elderly man as we knew him, and a large landed proprietor, had by his own exertions raised and equipped a loyalist corps, which assembled and drilled

within his own demesne. He was conscious all the while that those in his employment—his grooms, gardeners, and so forth—were rebels to a man. There was only one of his dependants on whom he placed absolute reliance, his butler, who had been in the service of the family from childhood. Not till long afterwards did he discover that this man, after listening to the conversation at the dinner-table and the discussions incautiously carried on there, was wont nightly to mount a horse in his master's stable and to ride about the country to bring the rebels warning of any plans that were being concerted against them.

As is generally known, the most formidable encounter of the rebellion in Ulster was the battle fought in the town of Antrim. Lord O'Neill, the Governor of the county, who was himself in Dublin, sent down summonses to all the magistrates to meet him in Antrim upon Thursday, the 7th of June, to consult upon what measures, in the very menacing conditions that prevailed, it was best to take for the preservation of law and order. He himself only reached Antrim at noon upon that day, not having been recognised upon the way, but his servants, who followed him, were stopped and robbed of their arms. Intelligence of the intended meeting was conveyed to Henry Joy M'Cracken, Commander-in-Chief of the United Irish Army of the North, as he was somewhat grandiosely styled,—a young man of considerable ability and promise; and he determined by a bold stroke to capture the town and the whole body of the magistracy therein assembled. The rank and file of the rebel forces were induced to believe that only a three-days' campaign was required to ensure them of absolute victory. Each man was to provide his own commissariat for that period, which, for the large majority, consisted in nothing more than a stockingful of meal. The untrustworthiness of those who held post in this Army of the North was speedily proved, for of the "Colonels of Antrim," each of whom was expected to bring five hundred men to the appointed rendezvous, two, upon receiving M'Cracken's written order, made haste to send it to General Nugent, who commanded the King's troops in Belfast, whilst a third waited upon him in person with that document.

Our relative, riding into Antrim upon the morning of the 7th to take part in the conference, encountered the rebel army upon its march, and was promptly made prisoner, and conveyed to their encampment upon Donegore, the conical hill, crowned by an ancient Irish rath, that overlooks Antrim. Here he was held a hostage throughout the day, whilst the fiercely-fought struggle—in which Lord O'Neill was unhorsed and mortally wounded by a pike-thrust, given him, it is said, by one of his own retainers—was waged in the market-place and in the

streets of that ordinarily peaceable and prosperous little town. The fortune of the day was only decided by the arrival of a body of the King's troops, whom General Nugent, on receipt of the information so treacherously conveyed, had despatched by forced marches from Belfast. Tidings of how the battle was going came up frequently to the camp upon Donegore, and there, after the final rout, Henry M'Cracken gathered what was left of his scattered forces and endeavoured to negotiate with Colonel Clavering, who was in command of the troops. A full and free pardon for every one was what the rebels demanded, but Colonel Clavering would listen to nothing but a complete and absolute surrender, the rank and file to be thereafter granted a pardon, whilst the leaders remained prisoners in his hands. On receiving this uncompromising reply the remnant of the rebel army melted away, each man seeking to provide for his own safety; and his guard having disappeared with the others, our relative was able towards evening to make his way home.

Henry M'Cracken, with a handful of followers who remained faithful to him, lay in hiding for some weeks on the mountains above Belfast Lough. His sister, Mary M'Cracken, who was passionately devoted to him, used to steal out of Belfast at night, at peril of her life, to bring him necessaries and give him warning of any attempts of which she could learn that were being made to track him down. Arrangements had been effected with the captain of a ship that lay in the Lough to carry him abroad, and he was on his way down from the mountains to embark when he was recognised and captured by the Carrickfergus Cavalry, a loyal corps. He was tried by court-martial and sentenced to death. The gallows on which he suffered was erected in Belfast, at the corner of High Street and the Corn Market, and his sister, who, by the kindly connivance of some of the officers, had succeeded in forcing her way into his cell, walked, holding his hand, to the foot of the fatal gibbet, and only there did she suffer herself to be led away. She was still living in our early recollection, a little old lady, entirely given up to good deeds and works of charity, always dressed in black, and trotting busily about the streets of Belfast, bent on some errand of mercy.

Our relative had apparently used up such store of energy as he possessed during those troublous times, for during the rest of his life he remained a very easy-going, not to say negligent, individual. One of his younger brothers being on one occasion upon a visit to the old ancestral home, saw with considerable annoyance two of his small nephews kicking a large parchment deed, which they had crumpled together, as a football about the room.

"It's a shame to allow the lads to treat that old document in that fashion," he remonstrated. "Most likely it's one of our old family papers."

"Oh, let them alone," was the indifferent answer. "Who cares for old rubbish of that sort?"

"I do," said the indignant younger brother, and he forthwith took forcible possession of his nephews' plaything. Having flattened it out and deciphered it, he discovered, to his boundless astonishment, that it was nothing less than Letters Patent, bearing the signature of William III., thanking an ancestor of his for the signal services he had rendered at the Battle of the Boyne and during the rest of William's campaign in Ireland, and giving a royal pledge and promise that, in gratitude for those services, any direct descendant of his, to the remotest generation, should have the right to demand a commission in the English army, and that it should be given him.

The brother had a promising boy of his own, some years older than the young footballers. He said nothing of the discovery that he had made, but put the document in his pocket and set off posthaste for London. He presented himself at the War Office, produced the precious parchment, all torn and tattered as it was by the ill-usage that it had received, and demanded fulfilment of the promise and a commission for his son. The genuineness of the document and of the signature could not be impugned, nor yet the validity of the privilege that it conferred. A commission was accordingly made out for the young aspirant, but the military authorities, having once got the deed into their possession for purposes of scrutiny, took good heed not to part with it again, thus putting an end to all further family claims, and it very possibly reposes still in some dusty pigeon-hole at the War Office.

At that time most of the country gentry had their town residences in Belfast, solid, red-brick Georgian houses, in which they spent the winter months, and which stood in what are now the busiest parts of that industrial city. Sunday had not the austerity that might have been expected where the population were largely Presbyterian and of Scottish descent. No one dreamed of proceeding to his or her place of worship on foot, even if it were in the next street or merely round the corner, but drove there in state, and the parade of clarences and barouches outside the more fashionable churches of a Sunday morning used to be most imposing. On Sunday afternoons a military band played in the grounds of the Linen Hall, and all the world of fashion walked up and down there.

We children who did not attend this promenade had an entertainment of our own, but one with which we did not think it needful to acquaint our elders. Belfast, as it is hardly needful to remark, has grown enormously since those days, and though our house, as already said, stood in the centre of the town, its back windows looked out over open fields, with a right-of-way across them. In those fields

on Sunday afternoons regularly organised fights took place, and champions of the different working-class quarters of Belfast encountered each other there. Their admirers and sympathisers attended in large crowds, as did also the female element, the wives and sisters of the combatants, who rushed in with shrill cries when their side showed signs of being worsted. The prearranged fights invariably developed into a series of pugilistic encounters all over the field, or else into a general *mêlée*, which it was a joy to us, hanging out of the upper windows of our house, to watch, as also to look out for the arrival of the tardy and inefficient police, when some of the more prominent heroes of the battlefield were marched off to the House of Correction, by which euphonious name the jail in Belfast was known in those days.

The watchmen still went round the streets at night, informing those who might chance to be awake of the hour and the state of the weather. "One o'clock, an' a fine moonlight night," or, "Four o'clock, an' a wet mornin'," one heard the cry approaching and receding through the empty streets. The watchmen were provided with boxes wherein to take occasional rest, and very often they slumbered peacefully there and left the citizens without meteorological information. It was the special delight of the young bloods of the town to find one of them thus asleep and to overturn the box with the guardian of the night inside it.

There was much hospitality in those days, and of a solid and substantial kind, when it was scarcely an exaggeration to say that the board groaned beneath the weight of the good cheer placed upon it; nor did any one see therein a gross and vulgar display, but merely the laudable desire that one's friends should fare plentifully and of the best. Courses were fewer but much more abundant than at the present day. Entrées and savouries and such dainty kickshaws were unknown, and though soup and fish might lead the way, it was upon the main portion of the feast that attention was mainly concentrated. A saddle of mutton at one end of the long table would be matched by a lusty turkey at the other, with a ham and a beefsteak-pie facing each other halfway down, whilst the corners would be occupied by such trifles as jugged hare or hashed calves-head. This abundant fare in time gave place to a no less prodigal supply of jellies and blancmanges and cheesecakes, all home-made and of the very best ingredients: the housewife who had summoned outside assistance from confectioner or professed cook would have lowered herself everlastingly in her friends' and neighbours' eyes.

The duration of dinners was much prolonged by the universal custom of guests taking wine with each other. By some unwritten law, a gentleman never invited the lady whom he had taken in to dinner or

his neighbour on the other side to this ceremony, but leaning forward to address some acquaintance at a distance, he would say with a bow, "Mrs Blank, may I have the pleasure of taking a glass of wine with you?" If the table were long, and the distance too great for verbal communication, a servant would be sent round with Mr Dash's compliments, to deliver the message. The lady addressed bowed in return and intimated her gracious acceptance of the honour, as seriously as if it were a request for a dance at the least. The servant thereupon filled up both glasses,—if they chanced to be already full, a few drops had yet of necessity to be added,—and they bowed to each other again and drank. That concluded the ceremony; there was no drinking of healths or uttering of good wishes of any kind. A host was expected to invite all the ladies at his table to drink wine with him—not all at once, or in regular order, but one here and one there, as a pause in the conversation gave opportunity. All the gentlemen present similarly asked their hostess to take wine with them, but I remember that on one occasion, when a stranger formed one of our party, he, whether from shyness or forgetfulness, did not conform to the time-honoured custom and request my grandmother to take a glass of wine with him. She was a very stately old lady, with a great sense of her own dignity, and of the proper observance of forms and ceremonies. After waiting vainly for the expected invitation, she leant forward from the head of the table and said markedly and sternly, "Mr So-and-so, as you have not asked me to drink a glass of wine with you, I shall now invite you to drink one with me." This was, however, felt to be an extreme measure, even for an old lady, to adopt. Happily the expression "a glass of wine" was wholly figurative. It was only necessary to take a small sip, bow, and smile; had it been held needful to empty the glass, the consequences would have been disastrous. On the occasion of my first dinner-party my grandmother said warningly to me beforehand, "A great many people may wish to take wine with you to-night, my dear, as it is your first party, so be very prudent." And I was prudent, to the extent of barely touching the liquid with my lips.

The country churches of those days were unadorned and barnlike edifices, whitewashed walls and plastered ceilings predominated in them, and the services were of a corresponding simplicity. The pews were square and high-backed, and at prayer-time it was customary for the ladies to kneel upon the seats and face into the pew immediately behind them. Men did not kneel, they remained seated and prayed into their hats. Sometimes, when the faces thus turned upon them were young and pretty, I fear they looked elsewhere than into their hats, and not unfrequently whispered confidences were exchanged, and promises of dances at some impending festivity asked and

given under cover of the Litany or the prayer for the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The church that we in general attended did not boast of a vestry, but as it was a matter of imperative necessity in those days that the ministrant should don a black gown before he preached, a curtain had been stretched across one corner of the chancel to serve that purpose. We always watched with unfailing interest to see first one hand and then the other shoot up suddenly above this screen, as the old clergyman thrust his arms into the sleeves of his robe. He possessed a stock of sermons composed in some long past age of youth and energy, one of which he always preached. The pages, by dint of much handling, had become so worn that they could only be turned with difficulty, and as he was unwilling to facilitate the matter by licking his fingers in public, he supplied himself with a small sponge, which it was the clerk's business to have properly moistened and hung to a nail, placed conveniently inside the pulpit. On one occasion the clerk had forgotten this part of his duties, and when the rector mounted into the pulpit, no sponge was there. He did not suffer himself to be discomposed, however, but, rolling up into a ball the black gloves which every self-respecting clergyman then wore, he flung them with absolute accuracy of aim at the head of the clerk, who faced him in his desk upon the other side of the aisle. Thus forcibly reminded of his neglect, the clerk immediately carried the sponge up the pulpit stair, and the congregation were filled with admiration at the readiness of resource and the dexterity of their parson. Once, however, our spiritual adviser was stirred to compose a fresh exhortation, or rather philippic, and that was on the first introduction of hats for ladies' wear. Till then their only headgear had been the coal-scuttle bonnets immortalised by John Leech, and very becoming they were, with caps of what was known as blonde lace inside them, framing the face. Those first hats were very simple; the present generation would indeed consider them dowdy in the extreme, for they were of plain mushroom shape, with no other trimming than a bit of ribbon round the crown, but the old divine saw in them none the less a perilous incitement to the younger members of his flock to forsake the modest apparel enjoined by the Apostle, and to adopt instead the "broided" hair and tiring of heads that are reprobated in Holy Writ. What would he have said had he lived to see the present creations with their nodding plumes and parterres of flowers?

One of the most profitable pursuits of those days, and one that was extensively carried on in the more secluded portions of the country down to times comparatively recent, was that of illicit distilling. The islands upon Lough Neagh offered special facilities for the business, and much potheen was safely manufactured there and smuggled across the lake

under harmless-looking boat-loads of hay and straw. One band of stillers in particular had their fastness on an island in Lough Beg, the smaller lake through which the Bann flows on its way from Lough Neagh to the sea. Two causeways project into this lake, to keep the waters of the Bann in the desired channel, and on the end of one of these rough piers a small boy would sit, a sod of smouldering turf on the stones beside him. From this post of observation he could see the big police boat come stealing cautiously down the channel with muffled oars pulled by eight stalwart constables, for a considerable force was needed to capture the stillers at their work. Instantly he would snatch up the turf, holding it so that the police could not see it, and blow it into a flame. The signal was seen and understood upon the island, and the stillers thereupon caught up their stills and hurried down with them to the water's edge, where they sank them,—a cork, or even a large feather, floating at the end of a string, denoting where they lay. Once clear of the channel and within the lake, the police would abandon all effort at concealment and row their hardest to reach the island. Their heavy boat, however, could not approach within many yards of it, as it was guarded by an entanglement, skilfully made of large boulders sunk beneath the water all round. The would-be captors were therefore constrained to jump overboard and wade ashore, and long before this was accomplished the stillers had taken to their light, flat-bottomed boats that drew but a few inches of water, and only their mocking, jeering voices sounded out of the darkness, taunting the police as they came floundering on to the empty islet. Even if the small watcher was detected, nothing was gained thereby, since there is no law to hinder little boys from frequenting places that afford reasonable facilities for falling into the water; and this special urchin was always awaiting his father's return from fishing, or had some other good reason for being on the pier, and if a small boy was cold, why should he not make a bit of fire to warm himself while he waited?

It happened that among the dwellers on the lake-side was a retired military man, a stern disciplinarian, who ruled his household as he had ruled his regiment. Prayers were read at half-past nine every night, and immediately thereafter the whole household proceeded to bed. It never even occurred to him as possible that after this orderly procession upstairs some of the younger members of his family might emerge from their bedrooms again, and even venture abroad. His lads, however, home from school and college, were on the most friendly relations with the stillers, and on many a night they stole down to their boat and paddled out softly to the island, where they spent half the night, watching the illicit proceedings carried on there. Now the clerk of the church,

who also filled the *rôle* of schoolmaster, had come down in the world. He had indeed enjoyed the advantage of a college education, but owing, it is to be feared, to his own fault, he had sunk in the social scale, and had been glad to accept the humble post which he now filled. He was, however, a very pompous individual, and given to great magnificence of diction. On one occasion he approached two of the young fellows, home for the vacation.

"I have long been desirous," he began, "of seeing the process of distillation, and watching a still at work, but hitherto my wish has always been frustrated. I am quite certain that by your kind intervention I could obtain this gratification."

The two young fellows, suspecting a trap, evinced the utmost astonishment at such a request. "A still?" one questioned of the other. "Jack, what *is* a still?"

The clerk, however, was not to be put off by such pretences. He promised and protested that no tittle of anything that he might see or hear would ever be divulged by him, and that he would hold himself absolutely at the brothers' orders and do just as they should ordain. A rapid glance passed between the two.

"I think we may trust him," whispered the one, and the other nodded confirmation. An appointment was accordingly made, and the clerk was ordered to be at the wooded point where the boat lay at ten o'clock. Four stills were in full blast upon the island that night, and the clerk, having been ferried over in such company, was heartily welcomed, and hospitality, more generous than discerning, was proffered to him. Pannikins of the singlings, the unrectified and most insidiously potent spirit, were handed round. The clerk enjoyed himself most prodigiously,—so much so, indeed, that when two o'clock came and the lads declared their intention of seeking the mainland and their beds, he, all his promises notwithstanding, entirely refused to quit his new friends, to whom he had apparently sworn eternal brotherhood.

"Lave him wi' us," confidentially whispered the leader of the band, one Harry M'Lean, a fine, stalwart fellow, who was held in much admiration in the district. "We'll put him safe over, no fear."

The next morning the old gardener met the two young fellows with a face long-drawn-out with dismay. "Boys-oh! Have ye heard tell what's happened? The polis come in their boat at three in the marnin'. They've cotched Harry M'Lean, an' who wud ye think wi' him? Ye'd niver chance on it if ye was to be thrying for a year. The schoolmaister, him that helps his riverince to read the prayers up in the church!"

It was indeed true. M'Lean had proved faithful to his trust even to the last, and had refused to abandon his inebriated guest when the warning signal was flashed across the water. Striving to drag him along, he had failed to make good his own escape, and had been overtaken and captured. The collegians

felt no small dismay at the news, more especially on learning that the police had shrewdly sought to extract all the information they could from the drunken man, questioning him closely how he came to be on the island and in whose company he had come over, but even in his cups the clerk was staunch, and no incriminating information was to be extracted from him.

The wooded point where lay the boat that made so many nocturnal crossings formed one of the extremities of a tiny, almost landlocked, inlet of the lake. A mason was at work mending a bit of broken wall beside the boat-slip one afternoon, when M'Lean in fancied security came paddling himself ashore. The penalty that had followed upon his previous capture had in nowise deterred him from reverting to his old practices, and he was no sooner well within the little bay than a whole posse of police started up out of the bracken and from behind the gorse bushes where they had lain hidden, some guarding either point, and others stationed at regular intervals along the shore.

"We've got you this time, M'Lean," they shouted triumphantly. "You'd best come ashore and surrender yourself quietly."

This, however, with a laugh and a shake of his head, Harry M'Lean declined to do. A glance had shown him that he had no chance of gaining the open water before he was intercepted in the narrow strait at the entrance of the bay, and so he lay upon his oars, exchanging pleasant chaff and banter with the force upon the shore, whilst these latter, knowing that their quarry was securely trapped, sat down to wait till he should weary and come to land. A man was ploughing on the hillside above, and, unnoticed, a signal must have passed between M'Lean and him. The day was oppressively warm, and presently the ploughman, mounted upon one horse and leading the other, brought them both down to the water's edge to have a drink—a kind and merciful act to poor toiling beasts upon a hot day. At the same instant M'Lean suddenly started rowing with might and main for the mouth of the inlet in one wild dash for liberty. The police sprang to their feet and started in pursuit, running with one accord to join those already on the points. The mason happened just then to lift a larger stone than usual, grunting and groaning as he heaved it on to the wall. It slipped from his grasp, and crash! it had fallen through the bottom of the boat just as the foremost constable gained the slip, whilst the mason broke into bitter lamentation at his own awkwardness. "Wirra! Whativer 'll I do? The big stone left me hands, an' it has the Colonel's fine boat ruinated." Half the force were already waist-deep in the water, ready to seize the fugitive, when M'Lean swiftly turned his boat, and now he was rowing, more madly than before, for the shore that had been left unguarded, and where the horses now stood up to their knees in the water, drinking their fill. M'Lean brought his boat alongside, swung him-

self on to the riderless horse, and was galloping up the hill-side and out of sight almost before the baffled police had recovered from their stupefaction.

This, as already said, was in times comparatively recent. In earlier days, at the end of the eighteenth century, and in that wild and mountainous part of the country known as the Glens of Antrim, not the peasantry alone, but all classes of the community, participated in the lucrative pursuit of smuggling, as hiding-holes in old houses, skilfully contrived beneath floors or within chimney-stacks, still testify. A Mr Hill was at this time rector of the old church that stood above the little town of Ballycastle, where the most northerly of the glens open out into a wide and sandy bay. The reverend gentleman had on one occasion a dispute with one of his leading parishioners, which proceeded to such lengths that, after the fashion of the day, a challenge in proper form was sent and accepted, and it was arranged that the meeting should take place upon a lonely heathery waste a few miles from the town. It so chanced that both the combatants were freemasons and members of the local lodge. Intelligence of what was afoot reached the ears of another member, a worthy nailmaker. He would not appear to have seen anything amiss in the rector of the parish and one of his flock being about to engage in deadly conflict, but his susceptibilities were outraged at the thought of two brethren of the Order endeavouring to shoot each other, and he determined to frustrate their fell intent. He accordingly went to the room where the meetings of the lodge were held and possessed himself of the master's red cloak. Armed with this symbol of office, he repaired to the spot appointed for the conflict and hid himself in a furze brake. In due time the duellists and their seconds arrived, the ground was measured out, and the principals placed opposite each other. Just, however, as the signal was about to be given, the nailmaker sprang out of his concealment, flung the masonic cloak over the clerical fire-eater, enveloping him from head to foot in its folds, and dared his opponent to fire at that emblem of brotherhood and goodwill. The appeal could not be resisted, and, their deadly purpose having thus been defeated, the combatants, according to custom, shook hands and returned home the best of friends.

Under such conditions it is scarcely as surprising as it might otherwise be that the only son of the rectory, Hugh Hill, should have been the recognised head of the smugglers in the district, and captain of a lugger that plied about the narrow seas where Ireland and Scotland draw together, sometimes fetching away the potheen brewed in the glens and as far away west as Donegal, and sometimes bringing over cargoes of tobacco and other contraband wares. His crew was composed of stout young fellows of the neighbourhood, the sons for the most part of

well-to-do farmers, and both he and they were looked upon as heroes. Once they had a narrow escape from capture. The L-shaped island of Rathlin lies off the Antrim coast, and was in those days a most convenient depot for the contraband trade. There was a customs-officer on the island, to be sure, but an occasional keg of Geneva or package of tea left outside his door during the night rendered him most conveniently blind to all that was going on around him. Hugh Hill's lugger was lying quietly at anchor one day in the bay formed by the angle of the L, when the revenue cutter hove in sight, rounding one of the points upon the opposite coast. All hands were asleep below except the look-out man, but his shout quickly brought the crew tumbling up on deck in their shirts. Before they could get sail set and their craft under weigh the excise vessel was closing in upon them fast. Three times round the island the chase went, each crew endeavouring to outmanœuvre the other, whilst the islanders in wildest excitement ran from point to point to watch the struggle. Slowly but surely, however, the revenue cutter was overhauling the smuggler, and the latter's capture seemed inevitable, when, sailing under a jutting promontory, she was for a moment hidden from the cutter's view. Close beneath the cliff was a detached pinnacle of rock with a space behind it so narrow as barely to admit of the entrance of the lugger, but Hill's crew knew the place, and knew that the water within was deep. Before their pursuers had come in sight again they had steered into this snug hiding-place; the anchor was thrown out upon the rock, and the topmast lowered upon the instant. The eager throng upon the cliffs above could watch the lugger and her crew lying crouched behind the rock like partridges in covert, whilst the cutter tacked to and fro in utter bewilderment as to whither her quarry had vanished, for, seen from the sea, the isolated rock seemed part and parcel of the crag behind it. Her crew did not abandon the search till darkness came on, when Hugh Hill and his men crept out of their concealment and escaped.

The wife of a farmer whose holding stretched down to the sea had a fine flock of geese, that picked up much of their sustenance in the rock-pools and along the shore. Great was her consternation on going down one morning in quest of her flock to find that they had all disappeared save only one old gander, who was perched upon a rock at the water's verge, trumpeting forlornly towards the far horizon. Something seemed to hamper the bird in his movements, and on getting hold of him, his mistress found a bag of silver tied round his neck, payment for his more toothsome companions whom Hugh Hill had carried off to feast his crew upon.

The end came at last, however, and it came through treachery. Hugh had an ally in his native place, and when

he returned there with a cargo, generally after nightfall, he used to give a preconcerted signal, and his confederate came out and brought him word as to whether it was safe to venture in, and also piloted the lugger to her anchorage in the bay. On one of these occasions the confederate chanced to be absent, and another man, a local carpenter, came out in his stead. Hugh, distrusting either his good faith or his skill, refused to employ him, and the carpenter in revenge made his way across the mountains to Carrickfergus, where he knew the revenue cutter to be lying, and gave information that Hill and his lugger were at that moment in Ballycastle Bay.

The cutter forthwith set sail with forty men on board, and surprised the smuggler still at anchor. The wind was light and the chance of escape seems to have been remote. Hugh Hill, against the advice of his second in command, a man named Agnew, also belonging to the district, resolved boldly to give battle. The lugger carried some small cannon, and her crew were all armed. News of the cutter's approach and of the impending fight soon spread, and from all sides the people flocked in to watch it, till the streets of the little town were thronged "as if it was a Lammas Fair day," that being the great yearly gathering of the locality. It was beneath the towering cliffs that rise at the western end of the bay that the hostile craft closed in upon each other. The heights above were black with the crowd that gathered there. The women went down on their knees on the edge of the sheer precipice and with hands upheld to heaven "prayed prayers" upon the head of the traitor, and what like those prayers were we can very surely guess. The first shot from the cutter killed the lugger's helmsman, and therewith Hill seems to have yielded to Agnew's counsels and endeavoured to seek safety in flight. He had his cannon thrown overboard to lighten the craft—the spot where they lie is known to this day—and crowded on all sail. At first it seemed as if they might even yet be able to show the cutter a clean pair of heels, but the wind—always shifting and uncertain beneath high cliffs—dropped, so at least it would appear from an old "com'ally" or ditty that was made to commemorate the fight, and whilst the lugger's sails hung slack, the cutter by a skilful tack bore down upon her, and her crew were compelled to surrender. The cries from the cliffs were "la*men*table"—meaning not sad, but very loud and terrible, as the throng collected there saw the craft that was manned by their sons and brothers boarded by the revenue men. She was conveyed as a prize to Greenock, one can only conjecture why, but there Hugh Hill and his men were tried and sentenced to transportation to America. The carpenter who had wrought the mischief received so many threatening letters, adorned with skulls and coffins and other devices, that he deemed it

salubrious to make a midnight flitting in the same direction to which he had carried his news, and his native place knew him no more. Hugh Hill returned after many years to be present at his father's deathbed, but the times were changed, his old home had lost its charm, and he did not long remain there.

Stilling, however, was carried on in more modest fashion, not only in the glens, but even within the little town itself, long after the stirring days of Hugh Hill. But few of the houses in those days possessed pumps and wells of their own, and one enterprising citizen who desired to carry on illicit distillation in all secrecy in his cellar, feared the attention that he might attract if he were to provide himself with such a luxury as a private water-supply. He therefore arranged to have the water led in secretly by wooden pipes from a spring in a neighbour's backyard. The workman who carried out the work under cover of the darkness was solemnly sworn to silence, but he knew full well for what purpose the water was required, and he hankered after the handsome reward that was offered to any one who would reveal the whereabouts of a still. One night, therefore, whilst his wife was busied about the house, he set up the tongs in the chimney corner, arrayed it in his hat and jacket, and talking to it like a friend, proceeded to tell it all particulars of the work on which he had been engaged. His wife overheard the discourse and lost no time in giving information in the right quarter, and the reward was thus secured.

It is supposed traditionally that no fox has his dwelling in Ulster. None the less there have ever been keen Nimrods there, hunting puss with much zest, even over the heathery heights and along the beetling cliffs of the rugged Antrim coast. Amongst the notabilities of the hunt in those old days were two ancient sea-dogs who had seen service in the French wars, and being by age and infirmity precluded from more active participation, hunted on wheels, driving each their tandem over the old roads that ran unfenced and with undeviating directness, innocent of curves or gradients, up and down the steepest hills. Their homes were some half-dozen miles apart, and on one occasion they agreed for a wager each to start in a post-chaise at an appointed time, and to drive by different roads to the Diamond of Coleraine, whoever arrived first at the inn there to be the winner. One of them started to the moment, watch in hand, having first promised the postilion a goodly reward if he should win the race,—an intimation to which he only responded by a touch of his cap, and by setting off at a pace that betokened his resolve to win the promised guerdon. The long main street of Coleraine came into view with no sign therein of the rival equipage. "Drive like the very d—l, and we've won," roared the old sea captain from the window.

Down the street they tore, its occupants scattering like chaff before them, and drew up with a prodigious clatter at the inn door, when the post-boy, turning in his saddle with a broad grin, said—"I'm first here; I've won the wager and your bounty too."

The master of that northern pack, whilst in his full vigour and prime, was struck with mortal illness. Knowing that his days were numbered, he gave orders for his own funeral, and decreed that it should resemble as little as possible the usual solemn and mournful procession to the grave. The sad day came, and all the country-side gathered to do the late master honour. The hearse stood at the door, horsed with four mettlesome black steeds, and when the signal to start was given, it went away at full gallop. The drivers of the long train of vehicles, from stately carriages to humble jaunting-cars, who had expected the ordinary slow pace of such occasions, were constrained to lash their horses to keep up, and the mourners on foot were left running and gasping far behind. For seven miles, without slackening of speed, the wild cavalcade went, and it was only a scanty remnant that stood at the last by the open grave beneath the old weather-beaten church, hard by the cliffs and the Atlantic, where the master had elected to lie.

The coroner for the district, who was also a J.P., dwelt at the head of one of the Antrim glens, whose windings offered safe security for many illegal practices long after the strong arm of the law had suppressed them elsewhere. The potheen distilled in these mountain fastnesses had, from the nature of its manufacture, a flavour of peat-smoke and bog-water that, in the opinion of connoisseurs, rendered it far superior to what was known as "Parliament" or duly bonded whisky, and the worthy coroner did not suffer either his official or his magisterial position to hinder him from enjoying the highly-prized liquor that was distilled, so to say, at his own door. One morning, after having laid in a supply of this "mountain dew" from a band of stillers with whom he stood on a friendly footing, the coroner had occasion to drive down to the little town on business. He had no sooner arrived there than he was assailed by the police to sign warrants for the arrest of the very men with whom he had had commercial dealings but an hour before. A sudden and violent attack of gout in the coroner's right hand rendered him, however, quite incapable of holding a pen, though not of driving, for he forthwith returned at furious speed up the glen, standing up in his gig and crying aloud to the winds of heaven, "The police are coming! The police are on their way up!" Needless to say, when the police did arrive, it was to find the nest deserted and the birds flown.

On one occasion, whilst the gentlemen of our party were visiting at a house in the neighbourhood, they were invited to attend a cock-fight

which had been organised on a large scale. The coroner's residence, owing to its secluded position, was deemed the most desirable place for the battle-royal to take place, but none the less, having regard to his judicial position, it was thought prudent to hold the contest at night. When our party gained the house, after a long and difficult approach up a rugged road in the dark, the voice of the master was heard within proclaiming that, a large sack of potatoes having by mistake been placed against the hall-door, entrance must be sought by the back of the premises. Once indoors, however, they found banked-up turf-fires and the best of good cheer, as well as a numerous company already assembled. The cock-fight took place in the roomy, low-ceiled kitchen, the birds fighting in the middle of the floor, the spectators gathered round the walls, whilst light was provided by four bare-footed wenches squatting in the corners, each holding aloft a torch made of blazing bog-fir. It was broad daylight before the battle was ended and the last chanticleer had crowed his victory over his rivals.

The house in which our party were being hospitably entertained stood high up, on the very edge of the cliffs. The first news that greeted its owner upon his return in the sunshine of the early morning was the unpleasing intelligence that one of his best milch cows, in endeavouring to secure some specially tempting morsel of herbage, had fallen over the verge and been dashed to pieces upon the rocks below. The disaster being irretrievable, the house-party determined at any rate to extract some amusement therefrom, and a carefully worded message was sent up the glen to the coroner, their entertainer of the previous night, to apprise him that a lamentable fatality had occurred, and a valuable life been lost over the cliffs. The coroner arrived without loss of time, and was received by the whole company with faces of portentous length and gloom.

"We had best view the scene of the catastrophe," said the host, as he led the way down the winding cliff-path. "There she lies, my precious Mollie," he exclaimed, when on rounding an angle of the rocks they came upon the mangled remains of the cow.

The coroner proved equal to the occasion.

"Very sad, very sad indeed," he murmured sympathetically, without moving a muscle of his face. Then, turning to the guests, and to a group of grinning stable-hands and hangers-on who had followed the party down, he empannelled a jury on the spot, and proceeded to take evidence in all proper form. There was no difficulty in arriving at a verdict, and the coroner entered in the records with the proper formalities that Mollie M'—— came by her death through falling over the cliffs, that no one was to blame for the accident, and he claimed and received the fee due to him for holding an inquest.

J. M. Callwell.

TALES OF THE MERMAID TAVERN.

BY ALFRED NOYES.

VII. *FLOS MERCATORUM.*

Flos Mercatorum! On that night of nights,
We drew from out our Mermaid cellarage
All the old glory of London in one cask
Of magic vintage. Never a city on earth—
Rome, Paris, Florence, Bagdad—held for Ben
The colours of old London; and, that night,
We staved them like a wine, and drank, drank deep!

'Twas Master Heywood, whom the Mermaid Inn
Had dubbed our London laureate, hauled the cask
Out of its ancient harbourage. "Ben," he cried,
Bustling into the room with Dekker and Brome,
"The prentices are up!" Ben raised his head
Out of the chimney-corner where he drowsed,
And listened, reaching slowly for his pipe.

"*Clerk of the Bow Bell,*" all along the Cheape
There came a shout that swelled into a roar.
"What! Will they storm the Mermaid?" Heywood laughed,
"They are turning into Bread Street!"
Down they came!
We heard them hooting round the poor old Clerk—
"Clubs! Clubs! The rogue would have us work all night!
He rang ten minutes late! Fifteen, by Paul's!"
And over the hubbub rose, like a thin bell,
The Clerk's entreaty—"Now, good boys, good boys,
Children of Cheape, be still, I do beseech you!
I took some forty winks, but then . . ." A roar
Of wrathful laughter drowned him—"Forty winks!
Remember Black May-day! We'll make you wink!"
There was a scuffle, and into the tavern rushed
Gregory Clopton, Clerk of the Bow Bell,—
A tall thin man, with yellow hair a-stream,
And blazing eyes.
"Hide me," he clamoured, "quick!
These picaroons will murder me!"
I closed
The thick oak doors against the coloured storm
Of prentices in red and green and ray,
Saffron and Reading tawny. Twenty clubs
Drubbed on the panels as I barred them out;
And even our walls and shutters could not drown
Their song that, like a mocking peal of bells,
Under our windows, made all Bread Street ring:—

" Clerk of the Bow Bell,
With the yellow locks,
For thy late ringing
Thy head shall have knocks!"

Then Heywood, seeing the Clerk was all a-quake,
Went to an upper casement that o'er-looked
The whole of Bread Street. Heywood knew their ways,
And parleyed with them till their anger turned
To shouts of merriment. Then, like one deep bell
His voice rang out, in answer to their peal :—

" Children of Cheape,
Hold you all still!
You shall have Bow Bell
Rung at your will!"

Loudly they cheered him. Courteously he bowed,
Then firmly shut the window; and, ere I filled
His cup with sack again, the crowd had gone.

"My clochard, sirs, is warm," quavered the Clerk.
"I do confess I took some forty winks!
They are good lads, our prentices of Cheape,
But hasty!"
"Wine!" said Ben. He filled a cup
And thrust it into Gregory's trembling hands.
"Yours is a task," said Dekker, "a great task!
You sit among the gods, a lord of time,
Measuring out the pulse of London's heart."
"Ay, sir, above the hours and days and years,
I sometimes think. 'Tis a great Bell—the Bow!
And hath been, since the days of Whittington."
"The good old days," growled Ben. "Both good and bad
Were measured by my Bell," the Clerk replied.
And, while he spoke, warmed by the wine, his voice
Mellowed and floated up and down the scale
As if the music of the London bells
Lingered upon his tongue. "I know them all,
And love them, all the voices of the bells.
Flos Mercatorum! That's the Bell of Bow
Remembering Richard Whittington. You should hear
The bells of London when they tell his tale.
Once, after hearing them, I wrote it down.
I know the tale by heart now, every turn."
"Then ring it out," said Heywood.
Gregory smiled
And cleared his throat.
"You must imagine, sirs,
The Clerk, sitting on high, among the clouds,
With London spread beneath him like a map.
Under his tower, a flock of prentices
Calling like bells, of little size or weight,

But bells no less, ask that the Bell of Bow
Shall tell the tale of Richard Whittington,
As thus."
Then Gregory Clopton, mellowing all
The chiming vowels, and dwelling on every tone
In rhythm or rhyme that helped to swell the peal
Or keep the ringing measure, beat for beat,
Chanted this legend of the London bells:—

I.

Clerk of the Bow Bell, four and twenty prentices,
All upon a Hallowe'en, we prithee, for our joy,
Ring a little turn again for sweet Dick Whittington,
Flos Mercatorum, and a barefoot boy!—

"Children of Cheape," did that old Clerk answer,
"You will have a peal, then, for well may you know,
All the bells of London remember Richard Whittington
When they hear the voice of the big Bell of Bow!"—

Clerk with the yellow locks, mellow be thy malmsey!
He was once a prentice, and carolled in the Strand!
Ay, and we are all, too, Marchaunt Adventurers,
Prentices of London, and lords of Engeland.

Children of Cheape, did that old Clerk answer,
"Hold you, ah hold you, ah hold you all still!
Souling if you come to the glory of a Prentice,
You shall have the Bow Bell rung at your will!"

. . . . . .

"Whittington! Whittington! O, turn again, Whittington,
Lord Mayor of London," the big Bell began:
"Where was he born? O, at Pauntley in Somerset,
Hard by Cold Ashton, Cold Ashton," it ran.

"*Flos Mercatorum*," mourned the bell of All Hallowes,
"There was he an orphan, O, a little lad alone!"
"Then we all sang," echoed happy St Saviour's,
"Called him, and lured him, and made him our own.

Told him a tale as he lay upon the hillside,
Looking on his home in the meadow-lands below!"
"Told him a tale," clanged the bell of Cold Abbey;
"Told him the truth," boomed the big Bell of Bow!

Told him of a City that was like a blazoned missal-book,
Black with oaken gables, carven and inscrolled;
Every street a coloured page, and every sign a hieroglyph,
Dusky with enchantments, a City paved with gold;

Clasped with four great clasps, we sung, gates of royal splendour!
Upstarts may not lift that book, so heavy it is with gems:
Flos Mercatorum, when they flout your Rose of England,
Take and read it, Whittington, your ships are on the Thames!

Take and read it, Whittington, your volume of adventure,
Turn the heavy pages till the mighty tale is told,—
All the ringing record of the younger sons of England,
Down to Amen Corner, lad, a City paved with gold!

"Younger son, younger son, up with stick and bundle!"—
Even so we rung for him—"But—kneel before you go;
Kneel, by your father's grave, in little Pauntley Chancel,
Look upon the painted panes that hold your Arms a-glow,—

Coat of Gules and Azure; but the proud will not remember it!
And the Crest a Lion's Head, until the new be won!
Far away, remember it! And O, remember this, too,—
Every barefoot boy on earth is but a younger son.

Kneel you by your father's grave, and look upon your shield, lad!
Then—go out, unshielded, but with all the world to win!
Look upon your Lion—for the proud will not remember it—
Flos Mercatorum, ay, and England's Benjamin!"

Proudly he answered us, beneath the painted window,—
"Though I be a younger son, the glory falls to me:
While my brother bideth by a little land in Somerset,
All the open Earth is mine, and all the Ocean-sea.

Yet will I remember, yet will I remember,
By the chivalry of God, until my day be done,
When I meet a gentle heart, lonely and unshielded,
Every barefoot boy on earth is but a younger son!"

Then he looked to Northward for the painted ships of Bristol;
Far away, and cold as death, he saw the Severn shine:
Then he looked to Eastward, and he saw a string of colours
Trickling through the grey hills, like elfin drops of wine;

Down along the Mendip dale, the chapmen and their horses,
Far away, and carrying each its little coloured load,
Winding like a fairy-tale, with pack and corded bundle,
Trickling like a crimson thread along the silver road.

Quick he ran to meet them, stick and bundle on his shoulder!
Over by Cold Ashton, he met them trampling down,—
White shaggy horses with their packs of purple spicery,
Crimson kegs of malmsey, and the silks of London town.

When the chapmen asked of him the bridle-path to Dorset,
Blithely he showed them, and he led them on their way,
Led them through the fern with their bales of breathing Araby,
Led them to a bridle-path that saved them half a day.

Merrily shook the silver bells that hung the broidered bridle-rein,
Chiming to his hand, as he led them through the fern,
Down to deep Dorset, and the wooded Isle of Purbeck,
Then—by little Kimmeridge—they led him turn for turn.

Down by little Kimmeridge, and up by Hampshire forest-roads,
Round by Sussex violets, and apple-bloom of Kent,
Singing songs of London, telling tales of London,
All the way to London, with packs of wool they went.

"London was London, then! A clean, clear moat
Girdled her walls that measured, round about,
Three miles or less. She is big and dirty now,"
Said Dekker.
"O, ay, a silver moat," growled Ben,
"That's the new poetry! Call it crystal, lad!
But, till you kiss the Beast, you'll never find
Your Fairy Prince. Why, all those crowded streets,
Flung all their filth, their refuse, rags and bones,
Dead cats and dogs, into your clean clear moat,
And made it sluggish as old Acheron.
Fevers and plagues, death in a thousand shapes
Crawled out of it. London was dirty, lad;
And till you kiss that fact, you'll never see
The glory of this old Jerusalem!"
"Ay, 'tis the fogs that make the sunset red,"
Answered Tom Heywood. "London is earthy, coarse,
Grimy and grand. You must make dirt the ground,
Or lose the colours of friend Clopton's tale.
Ring on!" And, nothing loth, the Clerk resumed:—

II.

Bravely swelled his heart to see the moat of London glittering
Round her mighty wall—they told him—two miles long!
Then—he gasped as, echoing in by grim black Aldgate,
Suddenly their shaggy nags were nodding through a throng!

Prentices in red and ray, marchaunts in their saffron,
Aldermen in violets, and minstrels in white,
Clerks in homely hoods of budge, and wives with crimson wimples,
Thronging as to welcome him that happy summer night.

"Back," they cried, and "Clear the way," and caught the ringing
bridle-reins:
"Wait! the Watch is going by this vigil of St John!"
Merrily laughed the chapmen then, reining their great white horses
back,
"When the pageant passes, lad, we'll up and follow on!"

There, as thick the crowd surged, beneath the blossomed ale-poles,
Lifting up to Whittington a fair face afraid,
Swept against his horse by a billow of madcap prentices,
Hard against the stirrup breathed a green-gowned maid.

Swift he drew her up and up, and throned her there before him,
High above the throng with her laughing April eyes,
Like a Queen of Faërie on the great pack-saddle.
"Hey!" laughed the chapmen, "the prentice wins the prize!"

"Whittington! Whittington! the world is all before you!"
Blithely rang the bells and the steeples rocked and reeled!
Then—he saw her eyes grow wide, and, all along by Leaden Hall,
Drums rolled, earth shook, and shattering trumpets pealed.

Like a marching sunset, there, from Leaden Hall to Aldgate,
Flared the crimson cressets—O, her brows were haloed then!—
Then the stirring steeds went by with all their mounted trumpeters,
Then, in ringing harness, a thousand marching men.

Marching—marching—his heart and all the halberdiers,
And his pulses throbbing with the throbbing of the drums;
Marching—marching—his blood and all the burganets!
"Look," she cried, "O, look," she cried, "and now the morrice
comes!"

Dancing—dancing—her eyes and all the Lincoln Green,
Robin Hood and Friar Tuck, dancing through the town!
"Where is Marian?" Laughingly she turned to Richard Whittington.
"Here," he said, and pointed to her own green gown.

Dancing—dancing—her heart and all the morrice-bells!
Then there burst a mighty shout from thrice a thousand throats!
Then, with all their bows bent, and sheaves of peacock arrows,
Marched the tall archers in their white silk coats,

White silk coats, with the crest of London City
Crimson on the shoulder, a sign for all to read,—
Marching—marching—and then the sworded henchmen,
Then, William Walworth, on his great stirring steed.

Flos Mercatorum, ay, the fish-monger, Walworth,—
He whose nets of silk drew the silver from the tide,
He who saved the king when the king was but a prentice,—
Lord Mayor of London, with his sword at his side!

Honour was his oyster, ay, and with his sword he opened it!
After him the pageant of his great craft came,—
Drawn by horses of the sea, in mighty opal oyster-shells,
Rode the white sea-witches, with their tails of silver flame;

Curling in the shells for a banquet on Olympus,—
Little breasts of rounded pearl and mouths of ruby wine,
Tails of molten silver in the crimson of the cressets
Flashing now to gold and now to green sea-shine.

Grim black Aldgate like a deep green sea-cave
Burned with magic changes of the Deep whence all begins,—
Milk-white arms, and the trumpets of Arion,
Floating opal tendrils and rainbow-coloured fins.

Burned with magic changes, his blood and all the pageantry;
Burned with deep sea-changes, the wonder in her eyes;
Flos Mercatorum! 'Twas the rose-mary of Paphos,
Reddening all the City for the prentice and his prize!

All the book of London, the pages of adventure,
Passed before the prentice on that vigil of St John:
Then the chapmen shook their reins,—"We'll ride behind the revelry,
Round again to Cornhill! Up, and follow on!"

Riding on his pack-horse, above the shouting multitude,
There she turned and smiled at him, and thanked him for his grace:
"Let me down by *Red Rose Lane*," and, like a wave of twilight
While she spoke, her shadowy hair—touched his tingling face.

When they came to *Red Rose Lane*, beneath the blossomed ale-poles,
Light along his arm she lay, a moment, leaping down:
Then she waved "farewell" to him, and down the Lane he watched her
Flitting through the darkness in her gay green gown.

All along the Cheape, as he rode among the chapmen,
Round by *Black Friars*, to the *Two-Necked Swan*
Coloured like the sunset, prentices and maidens
Danced for red roses on the vigil of St John.

Over them were jewelled lamps in great black galleries,
Garlanded with beauty, and burning all the night;
All the doors were shadowy with orpin and St John's wort,
Long fennel, green birch, and lilies of delight.

"He should have slept here at the Mermaid Inn,"
Said Heywood as the chanter paused for breath.
"What? Has our Mermaid sung so long?" cried Ben.
"Her beams are black enough. There was an Inn,"
Said Tom, "that bore the name; and through its heart
There flowed the right old purple. I like to think
It was the same, where Lydgate took his ease
After his hood was stolen; and Gower, perchance;
And, though he loved the *Tabard* for a-while,
I like to think the Father of us all,
The old Adam of English minstrelsy caroused
Here in the Mermaid Tavern. Ay, who knows?
Perhaps Dan Chaucer, with his kind shrewd face
Fresh as an apple o'er his fur-fringed gown,
One plump hand sporting with his golden chain,
Looked out from that old casement o'er the sign,
And saw the pageant, and the shaggy nags,
With Whittington, and his green-gowned maid, go by.
"O, very like," said Clopton, "for the bells
Left not a head indoors that night." He drank
A draught of malmsey—and thus renewed his tale:—

III.

"*Flos Mercatorum*," mourned the bell of All Hallowes,
"There was he an orphan, O, a little lad alone,
Rubbing down the great white horses for a supper!"
"Ay," boomed the Bow Bell, "his hands were his own!"

Where did he sleep? On a plump white wool-pack,
Open to the moon on that vigil of St John,
Sheltered from the dew, where the black-timbered gallery
Frowned above the yard of the *Two-Necked Swan*.

Early in the morning, clanged the bell of St Martin's,
Early in the morning, with a groat in his hand,
Mournfully he parted with the jolly-hearted chapmen,
Shouldered his bundle and walked into the *Strand;*

Walked into the *Strand*, and back again to *West Cheape*,
Staring at the wizardry of every painted sign,
Dazed with the steeples and the rich heraldic cornices
Drinking in the colours of the Cheape like wine.

All about the booths now, the parti-coloured prentices
Fluted like a flock of birds along a summer lane,
Green linnets, red caps, and gay gold-finches,—
What d'ye lack, and what d'ye lack, and what d'ye lack again?

"Buy my dainty doublets, cut on double taffetas,
Buy my Paris thread," they cried, and caught him by the hand.
"Laces for your Heart's-Delight, and lawns to make her love you,
Cambric for her wimple, O, the finest in the land."

London was mighty when her marchaunts loved their merchandise,
Bales of Eastern magic that empurpled wharf and quay:
London was mighty when her booths were a dream-market,
Loaded with the colours of the sunset and the sea.

There, in all their glory, with the Virgin on their bannerols,
Glory out of Genoa, the Mercers might be seen,
Walking to their Company of Marchaunt Adventurers;—
Gallantly they jetted it in scarlet and in green.

There, in all the glory of the lordly Linen Armourers,
Walked the Marchaunt Taylors with the Pilgrim of their trade,
Fresh from adventuring in Italy and Flanders,
Flos Mercatorum, for a green-gowned maid.

London was a City when the Poulters ruled the Poultry!
Rosaries of prayer were hung in Paternoster Row,
Gutter Lane was Guthrun's, then; and, bright with painted missal-books,
Ave Mary Corner, sirs, was fairer than ye know.

Ah, but he was hungry, foot-sore, weary,
Knocking at the doors of the armourers that day!
What d'ye lack? they asked of him; but no man lacked a prentice:
When he told them what he lacked, they frowned and turned away.

Hard was his bed that night, beneath a cruel archway,
Down among the hulks, with his heart growing cold!
London is a rare town, but O, the streets of London,
Red though their flints be, they are not red with gold.

Down among the hulks, as he used at his bedside
—*Jesters of England, this was very long ago!*—
Knelt he, with clasped hands, praying to our Father,
Simply as a little child . . . England, even so!

England was a nation when her hearts were great and simple!
Hath she yet forgotten? Are the great days done?
Yet will I remember, yet will I remember
How he knelt him in the dark, her little younger son!

England was mighty when her hearts were great and simple,
When the Might that made a man was greater than his own:
Knights on the Narrow Way had little need of subtlety:
So he knelt him in the dark, a child before the Throne!

Pale in the dawn, ere he marched on his adventure,
Starving for a crust, did he kneel a-while again,
Then, upon the fourth night, he cried, O, like a wounded bird,
Let me die, if die I must, in *Red Rose Lane*.

Like a little wounded bird he trailed through the darkness,
Laid him on a door-step, and then—O, like a breath
Pitifully blowing out his life's little rush-light,
Came a gush of blackness, a swoon, deep as death.

Then he heard a rough voice! Then he saw a lanthorn!
Then he saw a bearded face, and blindly wondered whose:
Then—a marchaunt's portly legs, with great Rose-Windows,
Bigger than St Paul's, he thought, embroidered on his shoes.

"Alice!" roared the voice, and then, O like a lilied angel,
Leaning from the lighted door a fair face afraid,
Leaning over *Red Rose Lane*, O, leaning out of Paradise,
Drooped the sudden glory of his green-gowned maid!

(*To be continued.*)

THE FRENCH ELECTORAL REFORM.

JUST before the summer recess the French Chamber, by 339 votes against 217, adopted the Electoral Reform Bill. It abolishes the system of small district voting and institutes a method of consulting universal suffrage, by which the political minorities in the country will obtain a fairer proportion of seats in the Chamber. It is Scrutin de Liste, with Proportional Representation in a modified form, which still leaves certain advantages to the majority. Though their victory is incomplete, the proportionalists are satisfied, because it is now almost certain the new mode of consulting universal suffrage will be applied at the next General Elections in May 1914, and because the principle of allotting the seats in the Chamber in proportion to the number of electors going to the poll is definitely accepted. Indeed on the morrow of the vote M. Dansette, Deputy for Lille, writing in the 'Éclair,' qualified the adoption of the Bill as "perhaps the most considerable event of our political history since the establishment of universal suffrage." That appreciation may be less exaggerated than most people imagine. To understand the advisability, not to say the absolute necessity, to substitute a different mode of election for the small district voting which makes every Deputy desirous of securing re-election the humble servant of the men who procured him his seat in Parliament, it will suffice to remember how the present situation arose. Since the foundation of the Third French Republic, on only one occasion, the General Elections of 1877, after Marshal MacMahon's *coup d'état*, did fifty per cent of the electors go to the poll! From that time till to-day the proportion of abstainers has gone on increasing at every successive consultation of Universal Suffrage. The electors belonging to the political minorities, and especially those of the aristocratic and upper *bourgeois* classes, seeing the number of their representatives in Parliament decrease, lost heart. Their argument was, "What is the use of going to the poll? Our votes will inevitably be swamped by those of the advanced Republican and Socialist workmen." But the injustice of the Scrutin d'Arrondissement, by which a man polling, say, 50,000 votes is elected, while the opposition, which may have given 49,999 votes to its candidate, is left entirely unrepresented, became so flagrant that it was not astonishing means should be sought to remedy it. Having before them the example of Belgium, where the proportional representation in the Chambers of all the political parties in the country had, since 1900, been secured by the Hondt method, and given satisfactory results, it was natural

the French reformers should think of the adoption of that system, of which the principle was conceived by the English savant, Thomas Hare, in 1859.

It was M. Charles Benoist who took the lead and earned the nickname of "Father of the R.P." He and his followers had strong arguments of a general character to put before the country in favour of their proposed reform, but there are others about which less has been said. The old method of small district voting had resulted in the weakening of political parties and in the formation of groups of Deputies for the defence of their special electoral interests. It may be said that at the present moment there is in the Chamber only one political party in the old and correct acceptation of the expression, and that party is the Socialist party. It is admitted even by their adversaries that the Unified Socialists, with M. Jaures at their head, place the general interests of their party and, as they understand them, of their country, before and above personal considerations. As for the Radicals, they are held together by their desire to continue to enjoy the sweets and advantages of power.

A striking proof of the correctness of this assertion is furnished by the fact that of the ninety odd members composing the newly formed "Committee for the Defence of Universal Suffrage," which has undertaken to agitate the country with the object of inducing the Senate to reject the reform and thus ensure the maintenance of the existing system of small district voting, no fewer than thirty-five are former Ministers or Under-Secretaries of State. It is true many of them are Senators, and consequently not personally concerned in the projected measure, except in so far as its adoption may in a more or less near future lead to the modification of the mode of election of members of the Upper Assembly. As for the ex-Ministers belonging to the Chamber who are on the list of this Committee, it is quite possible that as they are for the most part eminent men they will keep their seats even with the adoption of Scrutin de Liste with Proportional Representation, but their chances of being chosen as Minister will probably be materially diminished. The same remark holds good even for the ex-Ministers belonging to the Senate, because they are all Radicals, and if any political party is likely to see its numerical strength in Parliament diminished by the application of the proposed electoral reform it is the Radical party, which made so many promises it never kept and used such scandalous official pressure to secure the election of its supporters. Moreover, the partisans of the reform are convinced the adoption of Scrutin de Liste with Proportional Representation will induce many eminent men, who till now have shrunk from the slavery imposed on their representatives by the electors, to present

themselves as candidates in the enlarged constituencies.

At the present moment, with the Scrutin d'Arrondissement, it is almost impossible for a Deputy to attend properly to his parliamentary work. It may be stated, on most trustworthy authority, that of twenty letters received by a Deputy from his electors an average of eighteen concern local affairs or private interests and only two his legislative mandate. The consequence is that having to attend to those affairs he must write numerous letters, take steps to obtain favours from Ministers and high officials, &c. His time is so fully occupied by this work that he has no leisure to study the questions on which he is called on to vote. All his energy is spent in satisfying his constituents' local or private interests.

Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that of the 497 Deputies composing the present Chamber there were at least 350 who did not study the parliamentary papers (the reports of the Universal Suffrage Commission, &c.) before voting against or for the Electoral Reform Bill, though it is a measure which concerns them personally. As for the other parliamentary papers, it may be taken for granted that even a larger number of Deputies abstain from reading them. It is a regrettable but undeniable fact that the Scrutin d'Arrondissement method of voting has led to the Deputyship being sought by very many men who regard their election as an appointment to a post which, for the emoluments attached to it, has to be preserved. It is probable some of them will fail to secure re-election by the proposed new method of consulting Universal Suffrage, and will be replaced by persons of greater political influence; and perhaps those who succeed in keeping their seats will, when relieved of the constant appeals of their constituents, have the necessary time to study the Bills submitted to them, and thus become good legislators.

The hoped-for results of the application of the proposed Electoral Reform may therefore be summed up as follows:—

The reduction to a minimum of the possibilities of corrupt practices.

The constitution of really homogeneous political parties.

The raising of the moral and intellectual standard of Deputies.

The possibility to effect the much-needed and long-promised administrative and social reforms.

The proposed electoral reform does not in any way modify the part to be played by the elector personally. He votes in exactly the same way as if it were an ordinary Scrutin de Liste election. It devolves on the electoral verification commission to make the elementary additions and divisions which are required for the distribution of the seats in the Chamber to the competitors. A citizen cannot be a candidate in more than one constituency (department). If he makes the legal declaration as candidate in

more than one constituency only the first in date is valid, and if they all bear the same date all are null and void. The lists of candidates drawn up by the political parties contesting the election must be presented to the Prefectoral authorities for legalisation. Two or more lists of candidates of a constituency may be allied for the utilisation of their votes remaining over after the first distribution of seats, by the application of the electoral standard measure, which is called "electoral quotient." The declaration of such an alliance, described as "apparentment," signed by the first candidate of each of the contracting lists, must be made at least ten days before the opening of the poll.

The voting tickets are printed and distributed to the electors by the Prefectoral authorities, and none but those tickets are valid. They are given to each elector with his elector's card, and consist in the legally registered lists of candidates, with a blank space at the foot of each, and a completely blank sheet, each of which bears a special number. When a voting ticket contains more names than the number of Deputies to be elected, it is valid, but the additional names are not counted.

The result of the voting at each polling-place is, with the voting tickets, &c., sent in a registered packet by post to the President of the Civil Tribunal of the chief town of the department. On the day previously fixed the registered packets thus received are opened by the President of the Civil Tribunal, assisted by a Commission composed of three members of the Council General of the department selected by lot, and two representatives of each of the competing lists designated by the candidates themselves. The Commission counts the number of electors who have voted, and the number of votes given to each candidate. To establish the electoral quotient or standard measure, the total number of electors having participated in the election is divided by the number of Deputies attributed to the constituency (department). The first distribution of seats in the Chamber to the respective lists is made by dividing the number of electors having voted in favour of each list by the electoral quotient or standard measure. Though every elector must employ one of the official printed lists or forms furnished by the Prefectoral authorities — each bearing a title such as "Radical List," "Conservative List," "Socialist List," &c., — he is at liberty to vote for all the candidates forming the list, or to modify the list by striking out names and inserting others of candidates inscribed on other lists; or he can, if he so chooses, vote with an incomplete list. Consequently, to ascertain the total number of electors who voted for the list, all the votes given to the candidates on the voting tickets bearing the title of the list, and all the votes attributed to its candidates

by electors voting with voting tickets bearing the title of competing lists, are added together. The total forms what is termed the "electoral mass" of the list, which has to be divided by the number of Deputies to be elected by the constituency to fix the average number of electors who voted for the list. Each list receives as many seats as the number of its supporters contains the electoral quotient or standard measure. After this first allotment of seats, and in the case of alliances between lists having been contracted, the unrepresented votes of each group of allied lists are added together; and in the case of the total being equal to or superior to the electoral quotient, the group gains one or more additional seat. Then if a list or group of lists represents the absolute majority of voters at the election, and has not yet been allotted the absolute majority of seats in the Chamber attributed to the constituency, an additional seat is given to it. In the eventuality of one or more seat still remaining unallotted, it is awarded to the list or group of lists having the largest average of votes for the seat or seats already attributed to it. The distribution of the seats between allied lists of the seats captured by their alliance is also made by the application of the same system of the largest average. To establish the average of a list or group of lists, the votes recorded in its favour are divided by the number of seats already allotted to it plus one. The first of the seats remaining unattributed is given to the list or group of lists showing the largest average. In the case of lists or groups of lists presenting the same average, the seat is given to the list or group of lists which may have polled the largest number of votes. The same operation is repeated for the allotment of each of the seats which may still remain to be distributed. If no alliance has been made between lists, the unallotted seats, after the first distribution by the application of the electoral quotient or standard measure, is effected by the largest average system. The seats in the Chamber thus secured by the respective lists are allotted to the candidates in proportion to the number of votes recorded in their favour. In the case of equality, the senior in age gets the seat. If a seat can be claimed in virtue of equality by two or more lists, it is given to the list whose candidates may have secured the largest number of votes. A candidate, to be proclaimed Deputy, must have polled at least a number of votes equal to the electoral quotient (standard measure), or half the total number of the votes recorded in favour of his list. When the total number of voters at an election is not superior to half the electors inscribed on the electoral roll, no seat is attributed; but a second ballot takes place fifteen days later, and it is valid whatever be the number of voters. There

are to be no by-elections. When during the four years' legislature a seat may become vacant in a constituency by death, resignation, or any other cause, it is filled by the candidate who at the last election stood next on the list after those to whom seats were allotted.

This electoral reform may at first sight appear rather complicated; but it is in reality simple, and to make its working quite clear it will suffice to give an example. Let it be supposed that in a constituency (department) called on to elect 6 Deputies, four political parties, the Socialists, the Conservatives, the Radicals, and the Progressists, present lists of candidates. The 6 candidates forming the Socialist list obtain the suffrages of, say, 19,700 electors, those of the Conservative list 14,176, those of the Radical list 51,125, and those of the Progressist list 33,114. The number of electors participating in the election is therefore 118,115, which being divided by 6, the number of the Deputies to be elected, gives 19,685 as the electoral quotient or standard measure. In the first place, each list receives as many seats in the Chamber as the number of suffrages polled by it contains the electoral quotient. Consequently the Socialist list with its 19,700 votes gains 1 seat, and has 15 unrepresented votes; the Conservative list with its 14,176 votes fails to capture a seat, but has 14,176 unrepresented votes; the Radical list with its 51,125 votes wins 2 seats, and has 11,755 unrepresented votes; and the Progressist list with its 33,114 votes gets 1 seat, and has 13,429 unrepresented votes. Thus 4 of the 6 seats attributed to the constituency are allotted.

In the case of no alliance between lists having been contracted, the 2 remaining seats are distributed by the system of the largest average. If the Socialists with their 19,700 votes be given a second seat, their average of suffrages for each seat would be 9,850; if a seat be given to the Conservatives who failed to obtain one for their 14,176 suffrages, their average would be 14,176; if the Radicals with their 51,125 votes were granted a third seat, their average of suffrages for each seat would be 17,041; and if the Progressists with their 33,114 votes be given a second seat, their average of suffrages for each seat would be 16,557. Consequently the Radical list having the largest average would get the first of the two seats remaining to be distributed after the first allotment by the application of the electoral quotient. By repeating the operation for the allotment of the last remaining seat it will be seen that it goes to the Progressist list, because its average is 16,557. The result of the election would therefore be—

Socialist list . .	1 seat
Conservative list .	0 seat
Radical list . .	3 seats
Progressist list . .	2 seats
Total .	6 seats

However, supposing an alliance for the utilisation of the suffrages left unrepresented after the first distribution of seats by the application of the electoral quotient or standard measure had been contracted between the Socialist, Conservative, and Progressist lists, the result of the election would be modified. The unrepresented votes of those three lists being as shown above, 15, 14,176, and 13,429 respectively, make a total of 27,620. As that total is superior to the electoral quotient 19,685, the first of the two seats remaining to be allotted goes to the allied lists, and is attributed to the Progressist list in virtue of the largest average system. The last seat is also captured by the allied lists in virtue of the stipulation that the list or group of lists which is supported by the absolute majority of the voters at the election shall have the absolute majority of the seats in the Chamber allotted to the constituency. The total number of electors who recorded their votes in favour of the three allied lists was 66,990, or more than half the 118,115 who went to the poll. In virtue of the application of the largest average system to the three allied lists it is attributed to the Conservative list. The result of the election would therefore be—

Socialist list . .	1 seat
Conservative list .	1 seat
Radical list . .	2 seats
Progressist list . .	2 seats
Total .	6 seats

The candidates to whom those seats are given are naturally those who on their respective lists polled the largest number of votes.

The decision to attribute 1 representative in the Chamber for every 70,000 French inhabitants or fraction over 20,000 will only slightly reduce the number of Deputies. The present Chamber is composed of 597 Deputies, and the Assembly elected on the new basis will comprise about 584. Many thinly populated departments will by the application of this method lose one or more representatives in Parliament, while the departments containing great cities will be entitled to elect a larger number than previously. For instance, the department of the Seine, comprising Paris, which in 1910 returned 50 Deputies, will have the right to elect 57, and the department of the Nord, which elected 23, will return 26. The Seine-Inférieure will gain 2 Deputies, the Bouches-du-Rhone and the Seine-et-Marne 1 each, &c. Four departments will see the number of their representatives reduced to 2, and eight others to 3. It was on account of these inequalities M. Poincaré proposed to divide the department of the Seine into several constituencies, and to attach the small departments to their neighbours for electoral purposes. It was the Arrondissementiers who, in the hope of wrecking the electoral reform, succeeded in persuading the Chamber to adopt the amendment instituting the department as the in-

variable electoral constituency. The Government and its supporters in the Senate will insist on the Upper Assembly modifying that stipulation, at least so far as the department of the Seine is concerned. Paris and its suburbs will therefore in all probability be divided into several constituencies, each electing a maximum of 15 Deputies, and the department of the Nord, with its 26 Deputies, will be divided into at least two electoral districts. It may be the Senate will be prevailed on to amalgamate certain small departments. That the Upper Assembly will effect such needed improvements in the Electoral Reform Bill is almost certain, or at least far more probable than that it will reject the measure.

The violent, and at the same time underhand, opposition to the electoral reform which will be continued in the Senate, under the leadership of MM. Clemenceau and Combes, may lead to unforeseen consequences. Though the real object the "Committee for the Defence of Universal Suffrage" has in view is the maintenance of the present mode of election, the adversaries of the reform pretend they only wish to modify the measure adopted by the Chamber in such a manner as to secure the permanent predominance of Republicans in the Lower Assembly. It would be rash to predict what the future has in store for France, but it is an undeniable fact that the existence of the Republican *régime* is not endangered either by any single dynastic party or by a coalition of the small minorities representing what may be called the latent aspirations of Duc d'Orleans and Prince Victor Napoleon.

It is true that certain political personalities belonging to the Conservative opposition have sought and are still seeking to enlist the Catholic clergy under their respective banners, but they will fail, as they did at the last General Elections in 1910. The Pope then ordered the French bishops and clergy to abstain from allying themselves with any political party, but to use all their influence to secure the election of the candidates who, whether Republican, Royalist, or Imperialist, would undertake to support in Parliament the interests of the Church. So far from having modified the attitude he assumed at that time, Pius X., quite recently, repeated his instructions on that matter to several French prelates, and Cardinal Merry del Val, at the end of August, insisted strongly to Mgr. Campistron, Bishop of Annency, on the necessity of executing them faithfully. Though the Catholic Church will therefore refuse to identify itself with any dynastic party, it is united with all the Conservative minorities and the moderate Republicans, and even the Socialists, in demanding the electoral reform of which the Radicals are the only irreducible adversaries.

Nevertheless, though only a minority, those Masonic Radicals will persevere to the

very last in their desperate efforts to "saboter" the proposed measure, and thus render its application impossible. They hope that such a result would enable them to preserve their present position, and even improve it, at the General Elections in 1914, but it is infinitely more probable that it would lead to a most serious conflict between the Senate and the Chamber, which might easily be transformed into a constitutional crisis. Already, in presence of the agitation commenced by MM. Clemenceau and Combes, M. Lucien Victor Meunier has declared he will propose the abolition of the Senate, and demand the institution of one single legislative assembly. On its side the 'Journal l'Événement' reminds the inmates of the Luxembourg palace that long ago M. Guillemet presented to the Chamber a Bill for the election by universal suffrage of the delegates electing Senators. That Bill was voted by the Lower Assembly, but when it was sent to the Senate for discussion it was simply locked up in a cupboard, where it has remained for the last sixteen years! There are almost infallible indications that if the present mode of voting were maintained the Radicals would lose more ground than if the proposed new method of consulting universal suffrage were applied. The great majority of the electors, being favourable to the adoption of proportional representation, would vent their resentment on those who had prevented its adoption. The wisest policy for the Radicals would be to cease their opposition and frankly accept the reform. Considering the chaotic condition of political parties in France at the present time, it would be rash to indulge in predictions concerning the outcome of elections made with the proposed new method of consulting universal suffrage. However, it is evident the better disciplined the party, the greater must be its chances of obtaining the number of seats in the Chamber to which its importance in the country entitles it.

T. F. Farman.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

AMERICA AND FAIR-PLAY—THE PANAMA CANAL—'THE BATTLE OF LIFE'—THE LESSONS OF MID-LOTHIAN—THE LATE MASTER OF JESUS COLLEGE—A LAST LINK WITH THE PAST—A DON OF THE OLD SCHOOL—A SPORTSMAN AND A GENTLEMAN.

FOUR years ago when the American athletes, bearing the Marathon prize with them in triumph, returned to their States, three gentlemen, Messrs Sullivan, Kirby, and M'Cabe, made themselves the mouthpieces of outraged honour. "The attitude of the English officials," they declared, "was outrageous. . . . They taunted us in every conceivable way. They ridiculed our flag. . . . Their conduct was cruel, unsportsmanlike, and absolutely unfair." To these calumnies a full and convincing reply was given at once. The falsehoods of Messrs Sullivan, Kirby, and M'Cabe were duly nailed to the counter. They were nailed in vain. After Stockholm, as after London, the champions of American "sport" were noisily rancorous. They could not, on this occasion, bring false charges against the English officials. They were forced to content themselves with asserting at the top of their voices that the English are "the worst losers on earth," until at last they have stung to a reply the correspondent of 'The Times,' who was a witness at Stockholm of the Olympic Games.

This correspondent has told the truth with a proper dignity and sense of fairness. He has set down the following three plain facts, which, said he, were well known to everybody who watched the events in the Stadium:—

(1) "American runners in some of the races did as a team 'pocket' competitors of other nations in a way which it was impossible to regard as accidental.

(2) "As individuals they did on several occasions, besides, apparently with intention, 'swerving,' use their elbows to prevent the competitor of another nationality from passing.

(3) "At the starts of some of the races, and these not all short distance events, they tried persistently to beat the pistol in a way that ruined the nerve of other competitors who were striving to be honest."

That, together with the deliberate knocking down of hurdles, is not a bad record, and Mr Sullivan is to be congratulated upon his pupils. It is characteristic of American methods that no reasoned answer has been made to the charges of 'The Times' correspondent. The old parrot-cry has been raised that the English are bad losers, and that is all. Once again it is a Mr Sullivan who battles for the honour of the United States. Whether he is

the same gentleman who distinguished himself four years ago we know not. At any rate, in style and temper he is precisely similar.

For the winning or losing of international races we care not a jot. Defeat ruffles as little as victory elates us. We have no desire to see the representatives of England turn out "brainy" runners. But, above all, we do not wish to be accomplices in the conspiracy of silence which inevitably surrounds the games grotesquely called "Olympic." An English athlete who helped to "pocket" an adversary or used his elbows would be detected at once and warned off the running-path for ever. There would be nothing more to say, and nothing more would be said. But if it be an American who errs, we hold our tongues, lest the susceptibilities of a "friendly nation" should be hurt. Even when we are obliged to take action, as we were when Carpenter fouled an opponent in 1908, we do it diffidently and with reluctance. The news of American trickery at Stockholm has reached us many weeks after the games are over and done with. Though we are grateful to 'The Times' correspondent for speaking out at last, our gratitude would have been greater had he revealed the truth at once. For secrecy in such matters as this does a double injustice. It is unjust to the other nations, which compete with America in good faith. It is unjust also to America, which is treated with a consideration due only to barbarians. If we persistently give to America the benefit of a suppressed truth, we openly proclaim that it is not, as other countries, careful of its honour. It is only America, we seem to say, and what America does is of no consequence. Yet if America's shortcomings are thus ignored, how shall her athletes ever learn the lessons of fair-play? So long as they are the spoilt children of the Olympic Games they will behave like spoilt children, and take whatever advantages are offered them.

The fault is not with the athletes. In 1908 Mr Peabody, an American, who disapproved of the methods of his countrymen, confessed that "the belief in London was that the American athletes were honest and sportsmanlike, but their actions and conduct were constantly hampered and misdirected by the American managers—the so-called Committee of Honour—and the professional trainers." That is perfectly true. The danger of professional trainers has been so well understood in England that their ministrations have been forbidden to amateurs. And it is at the very moment when the cause of America's indiscretions is plainly discovered that we are asked to follow her example. We are constantly exhorted to purchase victory by public subscription, to bribe professional trainers to cross the Atlantic, that in their hands our athletes may become "wise" as well as nimble, and learn to run with their heads as well as with their feet. It is not an alluring

prospect. If each nation enlists its "rooters," and bows the knee to a "crowd" of sporting politicians, trained in some Tammany Hall of their own, then a free fight will be inevitable, and he will win the race who is quickest with his fists or handiest with his club. For our part, we are old-fashioned enough to prefer the simple ways of Englishmen, who still pursue sport for its own sake, and who believe that they can contend with another in fleetness of foot and strength of arm without the intervention of professional trickery.

In the antics of the "crowd," of which, as 'The Times' correspondent says, "the best element in American life has a whole-hearted dislike," there is more than a suspicion of politics. By a piece of ill-luck, the so-called Olympic games are held in the same year as the election of America's President, when the well-known sport of twisting the lion's tail is still supposed to attract the votes of the Irish and German immigrants. Thus we can understand how athletics may be turned to profit by the party machine, and how the "crowd," in insulting England, may gain something more solid than the applause of patriots. We have not forgotten that the eminent Mr Sullivan, who four years ago was loudest in his denunciation of England, boasted that he was the friend of Theodore Roosevelt. And if it be true that politics besmirches the sport of America with its ugly trail, it is no excuse, nay, it is rather an aggravation of the offence. For many years America has pleaded the exigencies of politics in extenuation of wanton insult and international bad faith. In doing this it has claimed a freedom which no civilised State could claim, and it has claimed this freedom on the ground of its youth. There is a time when the antics of youth pall upon us, when "youth" itself wears a spurious air, and the sooner America realises that it is not a young nation, but a congeries of the oldest peoples on the earth, the better will it be able to face the world with dignity and honour. No doubt we shall be told that the flagrant repudiation of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty is a mere freak of youth, that the demagogues who stamp it under foot are well-meaning gentlemen, and that we shall best consult our own interests by smiling under the affront of Mr Taft. Already, we note, a great part of the English press is busying itself in finding excuses for our adversaries. Not only does it busy itself in vain. It casts a slur upon the independence of America. Only the naughty child is forgiven if it wantonly breaks a window. Is America content to play the part of the naughty child for ever?

When by the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty the management of the Panama Canal was placed in the hands of the United States, certain definite conditions were imposed. The ships of all nations were promised the right of passage upon terms of perfect equality.

There was to be no discrimination in favour of American ships. The good example was to be followed of the Suez Canal. The isthmus where thousands of white men had laid down their bones, cleft and purified at last, was to be a highroad equal and open for the ships of the world. Thus would East and West be joined in a spirit of amity and goodwill. Thus would the friendships of the nations be strengthened. It was a pleasant dream which the approaching election will not allow to come true. At the mere thought of the polling-booth, Mr Taft throws to the winds the plighted word of his country. Truth matters not; honour matters not. All that matters is that he should snatch a few votes in a purely personal contest. His attempt to condone the offence is worse than the offence itself. The mere fact that, contrary to the usual practice, Mr Taft accompanies the signing of the Panama Canal Bill with a memorandum of defence proves that he knows himself to stand upon insecure ground. His attempt to explain the exemption of American coastwise trade from all tolls is worthy a pettifogging attorney. It claims no reasoned answer, and we hope that it will receive none. The pretence that this privilege was contemplated in the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty is manifestly ridiculous. When that treaty was being discussed by the Senate, Senator Bard moved an amendment which reserved to the United States the right to discriminate in favour of its coastwise shipping. The amendment, as 'The Times'—which has done good service by recalling a forgotten chapter of history—has told us, was defeated by 43 votes to 27. And after this it is idle for Mr Taft to defend his conduct by speech or to compose his cunning memoranda. Nor is the Bard amendment the only proof that the problem has always been clearly understood in America. In March 1900 Senator Davis submitted an argument to the Senate, which it is interesting to recall at the moment of Mr Taft's repudiation. "The leading Powers of Europe," said Senator Davis, "recognised the importance of this subject in respect of the Suez Canal, and ordained a public international Act for its neutralisation that is an honour to the civilisation of the age. It is the beneficent work of all Europe, and not of Great Britain alone. Whatever canal is built in the Isthmus of Darien will be ultimately made subject to the same law of freedom and neutrality as governs the Suez Canal, as a part of the law of nations, and no single Power will be able to resist its control." Here there is no uncertainty, no loophole of escape for Mr Taft. Explanation is unnecessary, defence impossible. Like the American runners, Mr Taft has proved himself incapable of fair-play. No doubt he believes that he has successfully pocketed his advisories and enhanced his fleetness of foot

by the free use of an intruding elbow. Perhaps when the elections are over the demagogues will confess that they have used the rest of the world as a mere means of collecting votes, and have insulted friendly nations with no better motive than to serve their private immaterial ends. Meanwhile, we can only hope that our Foreign Office will understand its duty; we can only record with pleasure that, as the best sportsmen in America deplore the grosser antics of the "crowd," so the soundest politicians of the United States are as clearly alive as the most patriotic Englishman to the "swerving" of Mr Taft on the track of justice. As 'The Nation,' of New York, has said with candour and dignity, "The Senate vote in favour of making the Panama Canal free of toll to American vessels engaged in the coastwise trade is a greater disgrace to this country than would have been a naval defeat in the waters off Colon."

We regret the more bitterly the conduct of Mr Taft, because we had looked forward to the opening of the Panama Canal as an opportunity of congratulating America upon the completion of a heroic task,—a task which has been foreseen by the prophets for a century. The vision of a passage at Panama was ever present to the mind's eye of Humboldt, and Goethe, in praising Humboldt's prescience, gave good proof of his own. "If a project of the kind," said he, "succeeded in making it possible for ships of whatever lading or size to go through such a canal from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean, quite incalculable results would ensue for the whole of civilised and uncivilised humanity. I should be surprised, however, if the United States were to let the opportunity escape them of getting such an achievement into their own hands. We may expect this youthful power, with its decided tendency westwards, in thirty or forty years to have also occupied and peopled the extensive tracts of land beyond the Rocky Mountains. We may further expect that along the whole Pacific coast, where nature has already formed the largest and safest harbours, commercial cities of the utmost importance will gradually arise, to be the medium of trade between China, together with the East Indies and the United States." And more to the same purpose. Goethe knew that he should not live to see his hopes realised. Nor is it likely that he foresaw the trickery of Mr Taft, when he expected that the United States would "get such an achievement into their own hands." However, Mr Taft has arrived in the nick, to show once more that the good faith of America is not proof against the contagion of politics. And with a superfluous anxiety he has done his best to anticipate the future. If arbitration be demanded, he, the arch-arbitrator of the universe, will not submit to it. Alas for the professions of demagogues! Had America

kept her plighted word the opening of the Panama Canal would have been a ceremony of pomp and felicitation. If Mr Taft mends not his ways, it will be attended, let us hope, by the representatives of no other state than of Liberia, the twin republic.

Mr Kebbel, whose pleasant book of reminiscences, 'The Battle of Life' (London: Fisher Unwin), we welcome with pleasure, is a sportsman of the kind which America does not understand. For him the game has been everything, the victory a mere incident of fate. He has been brave in adversity, he has taken his triumphs with becoming modesty, and it is characteristic of the temper of his mind that in this record of his life he has said scarcely a word of the field in which his triumphs have been achieved. If any man was deep in the counsels of Lord Beaconsfield it was Mr Kebbel, yet Lord Beaconsfield is never once mentioned by name in the book of his friend, and is only once, and then obscurely, referred to. When we remember the eager, interested garrulity of the common body-snatcher, when before our eyes a hundred busybodies, who can hardly hold a pen, daily vaunt their acquaintance with the great, thinking it no shame that the shaft of ridicule or the hobnailed boot of contempt was aimed at them, it is consoling to meet with an autobiography wholly untouched by the ugly and prevailing vice. Mr Kebbel has combined in a long career sport with scholarship; he has studied the life of the countryside with the understanding of one bred in the Shires; above all, he has met adversity with a gay and smiling courage. Though he is still happily in our midst, he is bound by a chain, unbroken in any link, to a strange and far-off past. Like Disraeli, his friend and leader, he has known the inside of a sponging-house. He has sat down at the greasy table of Mr Sloman in Cursiter Street. To that dismal hostelry he paid two visits, and at the second he "remained in Mr Sloman's custody for three weeks, having, of course, to pay through the nose for everything he required." No wonder he calls it a dreadful life: "the uneasiness and dulness and hope deferred were terrible." The company it was that redeemed it from utter despair. No doubt many excellent men fell into the trap sixty years ago, but Mr Kebbel's memory must have played him a trick when it prompted him to say that he met Jack Mytton at Sloman's. That eminent, if ill-fated, sportsman died within the walls of the King's Bench in 1834, and was but a memory of recklessness when Mr Kebbel was immured in Mr Sloman's parlour.

The sketches of Merchant Taylors' School and of Oxford which Mr Kebbel gives us have all the value of authentic documents. It is very pleasant to read of the heroes of the past —of Day, who got the Hertford and the Ireland, and of Charles D'Urban Morris, who "got his

first class without turning a hair, and was afterwards a Fellow of Oriel." When Mr Kebbel went up, the Oxford Movement was already taken for granted. He heard the sermon on "Absolution" which Pusey delivered in the Cathedral after his sentence of two years' suspension had expired. "I shall never forget that sermon," he writes. "It was listened to in breathless silence, and left an impression on the minds of many of those who heard it, myself among the number, which years have been unable to efface." But if he took a keen interest in the theological and literary movements of the time, he was a sportsman always. He could resist whist as little as he could resist shooting. "He sniffed the battle from afar," as Mark Pattison, his tutor at Lincoln, said, without malice. And in the schools he took a second, as Mark Pattison, by the way, had done before him,—"the just punishment," he says, "of three years wasted in pleasure, dissipation, and folly."

He need not have taken so gloomy a view of the past. A second has proved a sound basis for many a distinguished career, and Mr Kebbel, in whom the spirit of adventure breathed, could never have been content to pass his days in the seclusion of a university. He rejected without hesitation the humdrum professions, and lacking the money which should start him at the bar, he made a bold attack upon Fleet Street. The enterprise was far more desperate than it appears to-day. As Mr Kebbel says, 'Pendennis' had not yet familiarised us with the underworld of letters, which remained secret and apart, a place of doubtful frequentation and unknown dangers. But neither doubt nor danger interrupted Mr Kebbel's attack. He was resolved to write "for the papers," and he succeeded. And meanwhile, if now and then Mr Sloman showed himself too attentive, Mr Kebbel got what pleasure he might from life. Evans's knew him, and the Cider Cellars. He frequented Kate Hamilton's, and the Casino in Portland Street. He lived on terms of easy acquaintance with Ben Caunt and Nat Langham; he got "tips" upon cooking from Alexis Soyer; and he saw Müller hanged for murdering Mr Briggs in the Brighton train. In brief, he did all that there was to do in his time; he saw the sights and knew the men of the Victorian age; and he has told the tale with spirit and simplicity, suppressing only the part which he has played succesfully upon the stage of politics.

As a sound Tory, Mr Kebbel praises the time that is past. He has no natural love of progress. He has not the faith cherished by the half-baked, that we grow better and better every day, despite the exactions of Radical robbers and the hypocrisies of Radical office-seekers. He thinks the world is not improved by the smattering of education and the farce of University Extension. And as he descends to these

times he writes unconsciously as a stranger in a strange land. "In reflecting on the changes that I have witnessed in Church and State," says he, "in manners and customs, since I can remember anything at all, I am often reminded of what has been said (I think by Butler) of a future state, namely, that we may look back upon our present stage of existence as one in extreme old age looks back upon his early childhood." And Mr Kebbel looks back with clarity of vision for seventy years. He remembers going to the House of Commons when Sir Robert Peel was Prime Minister, and Sir James Graham Home Secretary. He heard them both speak, and he says, "they were addressing a public as little like the public of the present day as that was like the public of Queen Anne's reign." He has seen many sudden transitions and quick changes, and he looks back upon the gay and the grave with a quiet composure, not knowing which has predominated in his career. It is a good record of the battle of life well fought, and we commend it to the notice of our readers, with the greater confidence, because it is the work of one who for many years fought another battle, the battle of politics, in the pages of this Magazine.

Major Hope's capture of the historic seat of Mid-Lothian, the scene of Mr Gladstone's raging campaigns, is a political event of vast importance. It is natural, and irrelevant, that the Radicals should affect indifference to the rebuff they have received. Their easy satisfactions will deceive nobody, least of all themselves. They are merely blowing upon their fingers to keep the cold from their courage. They staked all they had upon the contest—their waning energies and the few principles that are left them. Looking about for a cry, they pitched upon the land, in the simple faith that there are always votes in plunder. So they sent northwards the ineffable Mr Outhwaite, a man apparently as ignorant as he is arrogant, a noisy, unthinking demagogue, cut precisely to the pattern of Mr Lloyd George. We know not whence he came, but he appeared in Mid-Lothian, with his mouth full of calumnies, and with no better gospel to preach than the gospel of theft. Half the Cabinet lent him support; the other half refused to recognise his existence; and as he will doubtless be paid by results, his future, we take it, is insecure. Mid-Lothian repudiated him and his cheap-jack remedies, and his masters must cast about for a more popular cry than Mr Outhwaite and the land before they undertake to fight another battle.

Meanwhile, the Radicals are professing to find some comfort in a simple addition. Add the Labour vote to the Radical vote, they say, and you will find a majority of some 2500 in favour of the present Government. It seems an easy method of self-congratulation, until it is superficially examined. It needs no great knowledge of

the fray to understand that the Labour party was fighting, not the Tory, but the Radical candidate. It was the Radical that Mr Brown set out to oppose; it was the Radical that he and his friends were determined to defeat. They liked Mr Outhwaite as little as they liked the Insurance Act, and not even Mr Lloyd George's belated and illusory promise of amendment softened their hearts. Nor had they much reason to show loyalty to the party which the Master of Elibank is said to have led to victory. That nobleman, in the full belief that his withdrawal from politics would leave his influence unimpaired, bequeathed Mr Brown as an unwelcome legacy, and thus cunningly set by the ears the two factions which formerly he affected to patronise. And if he had been gifted with a sense of humour, he might have concluded that the reasons which he gave for his resignation would not have commended themselves to the earnest Radical. A gentleman who deserts the party of confiscation, firstly to look after his paternal estates, a function which he and his friends regard as criminal in others, and secondly to become, as a partner of "my friend, Lord Cowdray," an exploiter of labour, can hardly hope to inspire the Radical party with enthusiasm. But a sense of humour is not the common inheritance of the Radicals, few of whom would refuse to profit by the monstrous "monopolies," the denunciation of which is easy and effective upon the platform. In the end, however, a house thus divided against itself is bound to fall, and we are not surprised that the Master of Elibank's insincerity did not prove a good vote-catcher. Is it not time that Mr Outhwaite cumbered him also with his kindly ministrations?

Major Hope's victory is doubly useful. In the first place, it returns to the House of Commons a member well versed in public business, who has improved a natural knowledge of affairs by a long experience of school board and county council, who, in Mr Outhwaite's despite, is all the better for belonging to one of the oldest families in Mid-Lothian, and who is as little ashamed of his principles as of his antecedents. It is useful in the second place, because it vastly increases the insecurity of the Government. Mr Churchill's bombastic orations will deceive nobody. The coalition Cabinet is no longer confident in its strength. It has bought the support of Ireland and of Wales, and it is just beginning to understand that it has not the wherewithal to pay the bill. Ulster will not be coerced merely because the Cabinet is mortgaged, body and soul, to Mr Redmond. The covenant signed in Ulster has put an end to the foolish game of brag. And when Mr Asquith looks to Scotland for help he is confronted by Mid-Lothian. His undisciplined followers are doing their best to escape each by his own road. It is a *sauve qui peut.* Mr Lloyd George, who

never had the smallest perception of England or of England's needs, can think, like the foreigner that he is, of no better trick than a fresh campaign of plunder. Mr Churchill, with the despair that comes at the eleventh hour, has thrown down an undigested scheme of twelve (or is it twenty?) parliaments. The Heptarchy was a very poor experiment in disruption. We are to be not seven but twelve or twenty federal states, and if we fight one against the other it does not matter. There is at least an off-chance that somebody or other may be conciliated. To that, at last, has "statesmanship" degenerated. It has become a thing of words, not of thoughts. The best suggestion that our demagogues can make is lifeless by the time that it has reached the reporters' ears. Meanwhile Mr Churchill has incurred, for the second time in a couple of months, the fury and contempt of his own friends, and it will not be long before Mr Redmond, enriched by a new campaign of beggary, will insist that the ideal of "Ireland a nation" cannot be realised by the sudden manufacture of twelve new parliaments. Thus it is that the victory of Mid-Lothian could not have been more opportunely achieved. The Cabinet, divided against itself, is without a policy of its own, and, bankrupt in confidence, it finds itself unable to honour the drafts presented for payment by the Irish, the Welsh, and the men of labour. The victory of law and order, then, is at last assured, and Great Britain owes Mid-Lothian a debt of gratitude for striking a bold and a decisive blow.

The death of Dr H. A. Morgan, Master of Jesus College, snaps a link in the chain which binds the Cambridge of our day to the past. It is more than sixty years since, as a freshman, he entered the College which he made his lifelong home. In 1849, the year of his entrance, Jesus College was not the house — famous in arms and arts, on the river and in the Senate House — that it is to-day. It was small in numbers and honours alike. Five years before Dr Morgan assumed the tutorship, there was an increase only of six freshmen. Indeed the College, as we have known it in our times, was Dr Morgan's own creation. He filled it with undergraduates, and then endowed it with a soul — a soul of energy and patriotism. He gave to one and all a just cause of pride in their College, and warmed their courage at the fire of his own enthusiasm. In all sports — in rowing and climbing especially — he took the keen and intimate interest of one who had practised them. He used to boast, and with justice, that he had rowed more eight-oared races than any man living; and his passion for the river is within the memory of all his friends. For half a century he encouraged the College boat by his voice and presence; he watched its rise and fall upon the river

with the stern enthusiasm of a general watching his army in the field, and his enthusiasm was rewarded by so long a list of victories as has never been claimed by any other college in the world. In the heyday of Dr Morgan's tutorship Jesus College kept the headship of the river for eleven years, and in the year of his death the first boat recovered once more its place of pride. It was not an unbecoming close to a long career of oarsmanship that last June the Master saw the College flag unfurled again over the boat-house in token of victory.

But an interest in sport was but one of Dr Morgan's manifold activities. There was nothing that enhanced the glory of Jesus College to which he was indifferent. The success of an old pupil in any career was always welcome to him. Few, indeed, were those who came under his spell who did not find in him a loyal, unchanging friend. Before all things, he possessed the gift of friendship. He was not a taskmaster set over the undergraduates; he was a light-hearted companion, an amiable contemporary — for he never grew old — of many passing generations. And he was able thus to keep the sympathy and appreciation of the young, because he was always, in the best and highest sense, a man of the world. It is the paradox of his career that, though he spent his whole life in Cambridge, he was never in the smaller sense a don. Deep though his affection was for his College and University, he did not limit his outlook by the Cam. None knew better than he that there was a wider field outside for human energy and human brains. It was not for him to judge a man by his place in the Tripos. He was never of those who believe that a boy's intellect is incapable of growth after he has taken his bachelor's degree. And it is precisely because he possessed the tact of understanding character and stimulating ambition, that the old pupils who visited him never felt themselves strangers. They easily forgot the tutor in the friend.

Being a man of the world, he was never censorious of others. He did not condemn the manifold eccentricities which were rife in the Cambridge of his earlier days. Many an old-fashioned don, whose extravagances brought upon him the contempt of pedants, received nothing but kindness from the Master of Jesus. Not merely was he gifted with a broad mind, but he had a quick sense of whatever was odd in talent or character. He eagerly welcomed whatever lay beyond the common experience, and thus his mind was stored with many curious chapters in the history of manners. To hear him discourse, with all his vivid sense of the picturesque, was like watching a panorama of the past. As he spoke, the Cambridge of fifty years ago, its strange narrownesses and

prodigalities, flashed before you. He had a rare faculty of drama in speech. As a teller of stories he had few equals in his time. Instinctively he represented the accent and gesture of those whose deeds and words he recalled, and thus made you participate in his knowledge. Had he written down all that he saw and thought and said, he might have produced a social history of the University, beside which Gunning's reminiscences would appear a blurred and faded image. But his talent was a talent of converse. He needed for his best effects the quickening eye, the ear of sympathy, and his rare art of story-telling will live only in the memories of the fortunate.

And not only was he an admirable teller of stories: he was besides a man of genuine wit, and very apt for repartee. Yet his wit, if sharp-edged, was all untouched by malice, and he loved repartee, not as a soldier loves his blade, but as an artist loves his tools. He sought to amuse, not to wound, and never did he make a jest that might hurt a friend. Though he was a man of strong views, though in matters of policy in which he thought his country's safety and honour were engaged he would admit no compromise, his natural kindliness and sense of humour gave a benignity to his harshest judgments, and rendered him wholly incapable of violence in thought or speech. In national politics a consistent Tory, he considered the affairs of the University with an open mind and without prejudice. He was as far from those who will admit no change in custom or constitution as from those who hold nothing sacred. He represented the central opinion of the University, and few men in Cambridge might boast his influence or match his authority. He was, as it were, a steadying force, and it is characteristic that he was elected to the Council of the Senate by both parties. His attitude towards University reform was very different from that of his predecessor in the Mastership of Jesus College. When Dr Corrie was asked by the University Commissioners what he believed to be the chief wants of the University, "in the first place," he replied, "I trust the Commissioners will excuse me for stating it to be my opinion that the present chief want of the University is exemption from the disturbing power of Royal or Parliamentary Commissions." Dr Morgan, though he liked not the principle of interference, though he was never a reformer in the modern confiscatory sense, believed that the University was not incapable of improvement. As early as 1871 he advocated with a persuasive eloquence the abolition of celibate fellowships, proposing at the same time that the tenure of fellowships should be limited to seven years, save for those who had devoted themselves to the service of the College. His plan was adopted, even in its details; and it says not a little for his sense of prac-

tical affairs that the Cambridge which we know to-day, with its married tutors and its swiftly lapsing prize-fellowships, was devised in accordance with his shrewd, far-seeing suggestions.

Great as were the services which Dr Morgan did to his College and University, conspicuous as were his achievements in the field of sport, it is not for these that he will be most warmly remembered. It is no small thing to see, as he saw, a college emerge from neglect into the triumph of success; it is no small thing to be the first, as, with his life-long friend, Leslie Stephen, he was the first, to climb the Jungfrau Joch. Yet as we look back upon his long and happy career, a career which began in the pleasant shadows of the dark ages in Cambridge, we think of what he was far more eagerly than what he did. He was courtly in manner as he was kind in thought. The gifts of sympathy and understanding were his in an eminent degree. He may be said, indeed, to have engrossed them. A loyal champion of the honour and privileges of his college, he tempered his patriotism with a profound knowledge of the larger world. If he succumbed willingly to the genius of the place, if he could not have lived happily beyond its precincts, he enormously increased its worth and dignity by the constant exercise of a wise devotion. The future will encourage, no doubt, many and various excellences. It will not show us another head of a house like Dr Morgan, a staunch Tory, a sound sportsman, sharp in wit as a Damascus blade, perfect in friendship, and a great gentleman.

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No. MCLXV. NOVEMBER 1912. Vol. CXCII.

CONTENTS.

What is Social Reform? By Arthur Page, . . 589

The Pirates of Leamcon. By H. Kingsmill Moore, . 603

Nunziata. By Vlan, ... 618

From the Outposts. A Foray, ... 638

A Revolution in Land Warfare? Col. Callwell, C.B., 647

Hocken and Hunken. A Tale of Troy. XXI.-XXIII. By "Q.," 657

Tales of the Mermaid Tavern. By Alfred Noyes, . 683

VII. *Flos Mercatorum.*—Part II.

Musings without Method, ... 691

Shakespeare's "Bad Plays" — "The Winter's Tale" — Mr Granville Barker's Presentation — The Post-Impressionists— M. Picasso and his Waistcoat-Button — M. Braque's Box of Bricks — The Naïveté of M. Matisse — 'The Episodes of Vathek'—What was their Origin?—The 'Letters of George Meredith.'

The Romance of Indian History.

By Sir Theodore Morison, K.C.I.E., . . . 705

An Impressionist View of Canada, . . . 716

A Path to Reality, ... 727

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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

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WHAT IS SOCIAL REFORM?

"The people never give up their liberties but under some delusion."—BURKE.

A COMMENTARY upon the social condition of Great Britain to-day from the pen of, say, Lord Palmerston or of Mr John Bright, or one might even add of Mr Gladstone, would prove fascinating reading. The leaders of the great political parties in the Victorian era may sometimes have lacked foresight in political matters,—the Manchester School, for instance, singularly failed to appreciate the supreme value to Great Britain of her colonial possessions,—but they were rarely found wanting either in conviction or in character. The men under whose guidance Great Britain reached the zenith of her political and industrial supremacy were, above all things, jealous to preserve the spirit of sturdy independence which had always been the peculiar characteristic of Englishmen. Is it not probable that the first criticism of such men as these upon modern England would be that Englishmen to-day are in serious danger of selling their individual liberty—the birthright of every Briton—for a mess of Radical legislation?

Is it conceivable that Englishmen in mid-Victorian times would have delivered themselves and their country into the hands of an uncontrolled House of Commons? Would the Englishman of Lord Palmerston's day have submitted to bullying or espionage at the hands of the innumerable inspectors and other officials who have been fastened, like leeches, upon the community by the Radical Government under guise of the Insurance Act, the Shops Act, and Mr Lloyd George's Budget? Do the electors realise the extraordinary powers with which inspectors, for example, under the Insurance Act are invested?

Under section 112 of that Act, an inspector becomes entitled to enter and examine for the purposes of the Act any premises or place other than a private dwelling-house not being a workshop, and to examine alone or otherwise as he may think fit, "every person whom he finds in any such premises or place," and to require every such person to sign a declaration that what he or she has told the inspector is true. In the form in which the Bill passed its second reading, even private dwelling-houses were included among the premises or places liable to examination, and if Mr Lloyd George had not been pleased in Committee to exempt private dwelling-houses from the operation of the clause, provided they were not also workshops, it would have been made impossible, under the Act, for any one to elude these paid inquisitors, no matter who or where he might be! Is it really becoming a matter of indifference whether an Englishman's house is to remain his castle or not?

Moreover, the modern system of public espionage is as objectionable in its matter as in its methods.

"We do not only ask to-day, 'How much have you got?' We also ask, 'How did you get it? Did you earn it yourself, or has it just been left you by others? Was it gained by processes which are in themselves beneficial to the community in general, or was it gained by processes which have done no good to any one, but harm?' That is the new question which has been postulated." (Mr Churchill at Leicester, September 5, 1909.)

Not only are Englishmen nowadays harassed by forms of supervision and inquisition entirely at variance with the spirit which hitherto has inspired legislation in this country, but there is an increasing tendency on the part of the Legislature to endeavour to oust them of their right to seek redress from Courts of Justice if an injury has been inflicted upon them. The sinister practice of providing that all questions which may arise in the course of the administration of Acts of Parliament shall be decided by a Government Department without recourse to a Court of Justice is growing apace. It may be roundly stated that unless this practice of depriving British citizens of their undoubted right of appeal to Courts of Justice is discontinued, the very foundations of individual liberty will be seriously undermined. It must be borne in mind that in a dispute of this nature the Departmental Tribunal becomes in effect the judge in its own cause, for the complaint which is lodged is almost invariably laid against an official of the very Department which has been appointed the *persona designata* to decide the matter. "The Legislature," as Lord Justice Farwell has pointed out, "appears to have trusted to that control over Government Departments that the House of Commons possesses, and which is usually enforced by question

and answer in the House."[1] But the facts of the now notorious Swansea School case, and other recent cases in which the conduct of Government Departments has been adversely criticised by the Courts, are proof enough of the difficulties with which the applicant may be confronted. Nay more, the Radical Government appear to be not unwilling to boast of the success which has attended their efforts to use their administrative powers as Ministers of the Crown for the benefit of their own supporters. Mr Asquith, on March 30, 1911, went so far as to write to Mr Hay Morgan, M.P., who had pressed upon him the advisability of introducing a further Education Bill, "I may also remind you of the relief which the Government has been able to afford to Nonconformists by *their administrative action*." Where could be found a more shameless or disgraceful utterance by a British Minister? Again, would it have been possible for a Home Secretary, fifty years ago, to refuse the protection of the Law to peaceable citizens on the ground that their endeavour to obtain legitimate employment was "provocative" action which might offend a body of strikers, who not only had repudiated the advice of their leaders, but were asserting the right to hold up the food-supplies of the metropolis unless and until their demands were unconditionally conceded? Are we not rapidly approaching "a form of democracy in which not the law but the multitude have the supreme power, and supersede the law by their decrees"? That is a state of affairs brought about by the demagogues, . . . and the people, who is now a monarch, and no longer under the sway of law, seeks to exercise monarchical sway, and grows into a despot: the flatterer is held in honour, this sort of democracy being relatively to other democracies what tyranny is to other forms of monarchy. The spirit of both is the same, and they alike exercise despotic rule over the better citizens. And, therefore, the demagogues grow great, because the people have all things in their hands, and they (*i.e.*, the demagogues) hold in their hands the votes of the people who are too ready to listen to them. (Aristotle, Politics, Book IV. 4.)

Every one who gives the matter the least consideration, knows only too well that by these and other similar devices encroachments are being made upon the liberties and privileges of the people. But why is nothing done? "There is a limit," as Burke once said, "at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue." Why, then, have the electors allowed the Radical Government so long to pursue their sinister practices unashamed and unrebuked? The reason is that large masses of the proletariate have been deluded into believing that, by surrendering themselves and their liberties into the hands of the Government, they will gain

[1] *In Re* Weir's Hospital, 1910, 2 Chancery, p. 139.

for themselves material and social advancement. Many a trade unionist, as those who have worked amongst them can testify, will nowadays vote for the policy suggested by his leaders, not because the policy coincides with his own views, but because he has been persuaded that it will be more to his advantage to put himself unreservedly in the hands of the officials of his Union than to act upon his own independent judgment. And, in like manner, the overwhelming majority of Radicals have come to believe that if they invest the Government with unfettered authority, the Government will be able to exercise its powers to advance the interests of their class at the expense and to the detriment of the other classes of the community. No greater delusion could be imagined. Even if the doctrine were well founded, such a course would still be inimical to the true welfare of the community, for it involves loss of independence and loss of moral character. But in truth, the doctrine is wholly fallacious and misleading. "You can only make the poor richer," it is urged, "by making the rich poorer." On the contrary, it is no more possible to injure one part of the community without injuring the whole body politic, than it is to injure one portion of the human body without injuring the organism as a whole. The doctrine that the ultimate interests of the several classes in the State are opposed to each other was exploded at least 2300 years ago. The story is well told in Dr Liddell's history of Rome. The "working" classes of Rome, dissatisfied with their social conditions, had left the city, and had refused any longer to serve under those who hitherto had employed them. Menenius Agrippa thereupon told to the disaffected citizens the following fable: "In times of old, when every member of the body could think for itself, and each had a separate will of its own, they all with one consent resolved to revolt against the belly. They knew no reason, they said, why they should toil from morning till night in its service, while the belly lay at its ease in the midst of all and indolently grew fat upon their labours. Accordingly, they agreed to support it no more. The feet vowed they would carry it no longer; the hands that they would do no more work; the teeth that they would not chew a morsel of meat, even were it placed between them. Thus resolved, the members for a time showed their spirit and kept their resolution. But soon they found that, instead of mortifying the belly, they only undid themselves; they languished for a while, and perceived too late that it was owing to the belly that they had strength to work and courage to mutiny!"

Does not the record of the present Government help to elucidate the matter? What has been the result of six years of class legislation and sectional animosity? There have been 3317 trade disputes, affecting 2,407,812 workmen, and entailing the loss of

34,740,323 working days. 1,156,610 persons have emigrated, and 680 million pounds have been invested out of the country. These facts are incontrovertible. Do they not also demonstrate the absurdity of the social delusion which has been practised upon the people? What is to be put into the scale on the other side? The Eight Hours Miners Act, The Old Age Pensions Act, the Insurance Act, the Shops Act, and the "People's Budget." If old age pensioners are for the moment excluded, is there a single member of the community, except the newly appointed officials, who can be said to have benefited by these measures? Mr Brace, M.P. (South Glamorgan), stated in the House of Commons on March 26, 1912, that "before the Eight Hours Act came into operation they got more wages than this (*i.e.*, 5s. and 2s.), because they were allowed to work overtime"; and, notwithstanding the "rare and refreshing fruit" that has been so incontinently promised, Mr Asquith was compelled to admit on June 21, 1912, that "there is no doubt we are face to face with a very substantial rise in the prices of necessaries, which has not been met by a corresponding increase in the rate of wages." Radical politicians never weary of reiterating to complaisant audiences their promises of social reform; but it is not unimportant to inquire what they mean by the term which they use. Rhetoricians of this school, almost without exception, invite their hearers to believe that it is possible to advance the interest of one class of the community by inflicting injury upon another; but if that is what Radicals mean by social reform, surely the experience of the past six years should be sufficient to satisfy the most hardened supporter of "progressive principles" that the policy is foredoomed to failure! The body politic, like the human body, is not made up of component parts shut off from each other, as it were, by water-tight compartments, but is an organism with arteries running through it from end to end, and with a nervous system so delicately adjusted that when one member is injured all the members suffer with it. Social reform on these lines always has proved, and always will prove, a failure; and it should not be beyond the power of Unionist workers to make clear to the people the truth of so obvious a proposition.

Social reform, properly understood, bears a very different meaning. It is the policy of elevating the moral character and improving the skilled capacity of the people. If the matter is thought out, it is seen that the real assets of a nation are not its coal-mines or its wheat-fields, but the skill and character of its members. Without the former, a nation can exist; without the latter, it must surely perish. That social reform in this sense is desirable all are agreed, but the Unionist and Progressive parties differ profoundly with respect to the

means by which the end is to be obtained. Unionists wish to level up; Progressives, whether they be Radicals or Socialists, wish to level down. Unionists believe that the State should be moulded by individual citizens; Progressives believe that individual citizens should be moulded by the State. Progressives desire the State to control both its subjects and its resources, and thereout to provide a livelihood for individuals; Unionists hold that it is the duty of the State to assist individual citizens to provide a livelihood for themselves. The difference in outlook between the two parties is fundamental and irreconcilable; and a social programme, whether it relates to land or education or temperance, or the regulation of industrial conditions or the poor law, must be judged to be statesmanlike or the reverse in so far as it conforms to the one principle or to the other. It is easy to illustrate the practical working of the two policies. Progressives wish the State to own the land and to parcel it out to occupiers; Unionists hold that the State ought to assist occupiers to acquire the freehold of the land they till for themselves. Unionists desire to see the children in elementary schools taught the religion approved by their parents; Progressives, the religion (if any) approved by the County Council. Progressives hold that Englishmen should be compelled to consume alcoholic beverages only at such times and places as are approved by local public opinion; Unionists believe that an Englishman, within well defined limits, is entitled to use his own discretion in the matter. Mr Lloyd George, in the course of a speech delivered at Birmingham on June 11, 1911, pithily expressed the Radical principle as follows: "I will tell you what is wanted in this country and in many others. You want to cultivate in the State a sense of *proprietorship* in these [*i.e.*, industrial] workers." It would be difficult to exaggerate the complete *volte face* which Radicals have executed in this matter of social reform. Let any one wander through the villages of Scotland and those parts of the North of England where Radicalism abounds, and in nearly every cottage the portrait of Mr Gladstone will be seen hanging in the place of honour on the wall. It is the duty of Unionists to make these people understand that they cannot consistently give their support to Mr Asquith and at the same time adhere to the principles which Mr Gladstone propounded. The principles of social reform in which Radicals until recent times believed are well set out in the memorable words of Sir William Harcourt. "If there be any party which is more pledged than another to resist the policy of restrictive legislation, having for its object social coercion, that party is the Liberal party. The proud title which it has assumed proclaims the principle on which it is founded to be that of liberty. Liberty does not consist in making others do what you think right

for them. The difference between a free Government and a Government which is not free is principally this,—that a Government which is not free interferes with everything it can, and a free Government interferes with nothing except what it must. A despotic Government tries to make everybody do what it wishes. A Liberal Government tries, as far as the safety of society will permit, to allow everybody to do what he wishes. It has been the tradition of the Liberal party to maintain the doctrine of individual liberty. It is because they have done so that England is the country where people can do more what they please than in any other country in the world. . . . It is this practice of allowing one set of people to dictate to another set of people what they shall do, what they shall think, what they shall drink, when they shall go to bed, what they shall buy and where they shall buy it, what wages they shall get and how they shall spend them, against which the Liberal party has always protested."

Let us apply the fundamental test of principle to these inconsistent social policies. Which is the policy most likely to engender competence in work and independence in character? There is not a shadow of doubt what the answer of every reasonable man will be! Throughout any investigation into the Unionist and Progressive programmes of social reform, this fundamental difference in outlook between the two parties must never be lost sight of. It is not necessary to draw any distinction between the social policies put forward by Radicals and by Socialists; for, as Mr Balfour pointed out at Birmingham in September 1909, "the old Radical thinker is extinct, and has been followed by a modern gentleman who does not think, but who accepts, with or without thinking, small fragments of doctrine from socialistic gentlemen who support him below the gangway." Again, Lord Crewe stated at Doncaster on 1st March 1907 that "they could not settle this question [*i.e.*, the land] by any system of creating small proprietors. . . . It was upon socialistic rather than upon individualistic lines that this question would have to be settled." One of the most pitiful features of modern Radicalism is the rapidity with which, in their social policy, they are "running down a steep place into the sea." So far as social reform is concerned, the programmes of Mr Lloyd George, Mr Outhwaite, Mr Ure, and Mr Keir Hardie are each only variations of the same scheme. At a time when Radicals are attempting to galvanise into life yet another crusade against the land, it is important that there should be no mistake made on this point. Each and all of them encourage their audiences to sing, "God gave the land to the people," but not one of them intends that a single acre of land shall ultimately be owned by any member of the public. The "land for the people" is one of the most misleading catchwords, as well as one of the most unmistakable delusions,

that has ever been invented by Radical politicians for the purpose of gulling a confiding proletariate!

Mr Asquith, at Earlston on October 3, 1908, explained the meaning which Radicals attach to the words, "the land for the people," as follows: "I will not to-day repeat the arguments with which everbody in Scotland is now familiar; arguments based upon experience and common-sense which have led us to believe that, both in England and Scotland, the most hopeful form of tenure for the small holder is not that of a proprietor, but that of an occupying tenant." Mr Harcourt, during the debate in the House of Commons on the second reading of the Small Holdings Act, 1907, expressed in similar terms the principle which underlies the Radical land policy: "If I thought that under the Act of 1892 there was likely to be a large amount of purchase by tenants in the future, I should be inclined to limit, rather than to extend, the facilities for that purpose. So convinced am I that for a great national purpose such as this, tenancy under a public authority, and the acquisition of land under that authority, is the most satisfactory solution of the question." It is true enough that Radicals desire to deprive the existing landlords of their interest in the land, but it is equally certain that they have not the faintest intention of abolishing "landlordism." The "land for the people" means the transference of the ownership of land from private landlords whom you can squeeze, to public authorities whom you cannot squeeze. It means that, and nothing more. The occupier is still to remain a tenant, but in the future his landlord is to be a public authority which, as the trustee of public monies, cannot afford "to take special circumstances into consideration," and, being an impersonal body, is quite indifferent to the human element which plays so important a part in the true relationship of landlord and tenant. The tabular illustration taken from Cornwall of the "advantages" which occupiers may expect to gain under the Radical Small Holdings Act, 1907, may be not without interest to agriculturists (see p. 597).

It is urged that occupiers will possess greater security of tenure when they hold under public authorities than they do now under a system of private ownership; but so long as a tenant is regular in paying his rent, and continues to work his holding with industry, it is not probable that any landlord, public or private, would be anxious to part with him. On the other hand, when evil days come upon him, is a tenant more likely to receive consideration from a public authority or from a private individual? The truth is, that the Radical policy of collective ownership can no more stand the test of criticism than their reiterated claim to be social reformers can be squared with their legislative achievements! Will collective ownership tend to encourage independence of character and efficient hus-

The places where the farms are.	The acreage of the farms.	The price paid for each farm.			The rent paid for each farm before the County Council bought it.			The new rent payable for the same farm by the small holders.			The increase of the new rent upon the old rent.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Goosewartha, St Agnes	162	2750	0	0	86	10	0	170	5	0	83	15	0
Laity, Redruth . .	209	5500	0	0	183	19	6	352	0	0	168	0	6
Lampetho, Tywardreath	216	4260	0	0	230	0	0	344	0	0	114	0	0
Lowertown, Landrake	127½	4750	0	0	200	0	0	254	0	0	54	0	0
Lydcott, Morval .	267¾	5600	0	0	243	12	6	431	5	0	187	12	6
Menerdue, Stithians .	239½	4972	15	0	175	0	0	341	16	0	166	16	0
Mithian, St Agnes .	178½	6350	0	0	238	0	0	359	10	0	121	10	0
Resparva, St Enoder .	87	1750	0	0	60	0	0	112	10	0	52	10	0
Treskinnick and Neydowns, Poundstock .	139½	1600	0	0	95	0	0	130	10	0	35	10	0

bandry? Surely the tendency will be exactly the other way. The Radical land policy will no doubt cripple the present class of landed proprietors. It is equally clear that it will in no way promote the social welfare of the agricultural community.

The Unionist policy with regard to land is, so far as the different conditions which prevail in this country will allow, to extend to the tenant-farmers of Great Britain the Unionist land legislation which has worked so admirably in Ireland. Unionists do not desire to see the present relationship of landlord and tenant entirely superseded by a system under which the occupier is in every case the owner of the freehold, but it must be recognised, as Lord Lansdowne pointed out on July 24, 1912, "that there are a great many owners of land who are no longer willing, or perhaps it would be more correct to say, no longer able, to bear the heavy sacrifice and responsibilities which are inseparable from the ownership of land. Rents, as we know, have fallen; they have slightly recovered of late, but they still remain far below the old standard. Burdens of all kinds are increasing at an abnormal rate. The rates increase, the taxes increase, and at intervals there are charges for estate duty which very often absorb a not inconsiderable slice of the capital value of the estate. To these considerations I might add that many estates are suffering from the old, and I think I must add disastrous, custom of piling all the family charges and obligations upon the land. The combined effect of all these things is that the old tendency to accumulate land has been replaced by a tendency to disperse it." In these circumstances, it is obvious that the ownership of a large section of the agricultural land of this country must pass into other hands. Who can doubt that, where it is practicable, the new owners should be the sitting tenants, and not the State or a public authority? The Unionist policy of offering State assistance to the tenant, not only for the purpose of

acquiring the freehold of his holding, but also of guaranteeing the credit of co-operative rural Banks, has met with remarkable success both in Ireland and on the Continent. Why should the State, which has advanced over one hundred millions of British money to assist land purchase in Ireland, refuse to advance the twelve millions which, under Mr Jesse Collings' Land Purchase Bill, is required to finance a similar scheme in this country? Such a policy conforms to the principle which must underlie all real social reform, for the "magic of property" engenders a spirit both of enterprise and of independence. "I think it is obvious," said Lord Lansdowne, "that no tenure can give the cultivator of the soil the same feeling of complete security, the same intense interest in the land which he cultivates, the same feeling of responsibility, and the same feeling of social dignity, which complete possession gives." That is an assertion which surely no one can controvert. The Unionist land policy, sound though it be, must not, however, be pressed too far. While it is desirable that the number of landed proprietors should be increased, it must be remembered that it is not so light a task as some people seem to imagine to make a living out of a small holding. The small holder can rarely make his venture a success unless he possesses personal skill, a fruitful soil, and a market within easy reach. Where these conditions obtain a large increase in the number of small holdings will prove, not only a blessing to the new proprietors, but a most efficient bulwark against the inroads of Socialism. It is possible, therefore, with Mr Balfour, "to look forward with hope and great expectation to the time when a Government may come in, not hampered, clogged, and bound by socialistic crotchets, which may adapt to the very different conditions of life in this country what a Unionist Government has already done with such marked success for a sister island."

It will not suffice, however, to settle the agriculturist on his holding unless, at the same time, steps are taken to provide those who are engaged in agriculture with adequate housing accommodation. The Bishop of Wakefield stated at the Church Congress on October 2, 1912, "that in many country districts there was approaching something like a house famine. The old sources of supply for rural housing were drying up, and new sources had not yet become available. Recent economic and legislative changes had hit the landowner very hard, and, with few exceptions, he could no longer build. Making full allowance for improvidence and intemperance, it was true that thousands of working-class families were compelled, through no fault of their own, to live in homes which were a scandal to civilisation and a disgrace to our Christianity." And there is no doubt that this view is, at any rate to some extent, in accordance with the facts. The problems

connected with the housing of the working-classes, both in town and country, have from time to time been tackled by the Conservative party, and now urgently call for further consideration. In one way only can the housing problem be satisfactorily solved, and that is by State advances for the purpose of reconstruction and rebuilding, secured upon the premises in respect of which the advances are made. But advances for the purposes of land purchase and housing accommodation must go hand in hand, and it is idle to expect that much progress can be made towards solving the housing question until the rival provinces of collective and private ownership have been defined and adjusted. In urban districts, however, a beginning has already been made upon the lines suggested under the Unionist Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899, which empowers local authorities to lend money to enable artisans, clerks, and others to become the owners of the houses in which they live. The policy of this Act must now be extended, and applied to rural as well as to urban districts. It would be folly, however, on the part of the working classes to expect from the Radical party any help in forwarding this urgent scheme of social reform. Not only have the Acts relating to the better housing of the working classes been almost exclusively the product of Conservative statesmanship, but the present Radical Government have gone out of their way during the current session to stultify a Bill promoted by Unionists for the purpose of quickening up the abolition of slum areas by local authorities, and extending the provisions of the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899. Notwithstanding repeated promises of social reform on the part of the Radical party, it appears to be the privilege of Unionists to tackle, single-handed, the housing question, and they must press forward their programme with earnestness and conviction.

But the causes of discontent among the industrial classes lie even deeper than those connected with the housing problem, important though that question undoubtedly is. Six years of Radical oratory, directed to set Capital and Labour in antagonism to each other, have done much to embitter the estrangement which in many cases exists between employers of labour and their workmen, — an estrangement which is the almost inevitable result of the change of industrial relations brought about by the transference of commercial undertakings from private individuals to public companies. So long, however, as wages appreciate, and the standard of living is not abnormally raised, industrial difficulties seldom reach an acute stage.

The unhappy industrial conditions which prevail to-day are the result of appeals to class hatred addressed by Radicals to workmen at a time when a substantial rise in the price of necessaries has not

been accompanied by a corresponding increase in the rate of wages. "There is," said Mr Churchill at Dundee on October 3, 1911, "one obvious and unmistakable cause of discontent among the wage-earners. The prices of food and necessaries have risen in the last fifteen years more than wages," and Mr Chiozza Money, M.P., the favourite statistician of the Radical party, wrote on August 16, 1911, that "in fifteen years, while wages have risen little more than 12 per cent, food prices have risen by nearly 18 per cent, which means that real wages have actually fallen in the last fifteen years. Next, observe what has happened since 1900. In that period wages have been almost stationary, while prices have advanced about 10 per cent." The facts, therefore, are not in dispute. It is not unnatural, in the circumstances, that industrial disturbances should take place. The important question is, What can be done to relieve the present unsatisfactory situation? Have the Radicals any remedy to offer? Absolutely none. Instead of endeavouring to improve industrial wages, his Majesty's present advisers have devoted more than six years of office to carrying measures which must inevitably increase the cost of production, and thereby hamper British merchants in industrial competition, and at the same time depreciate the price of labour!

"The patient is suffering," said Mr Lloyd George, in the House of Commons in 1904, "not from too little taxation, but from too much expenditure, and the cure is to cut down expenditure, and that is the point which will have to be considered when the time comes. . . . The old tradition of Chancellors of the Exchequer was to reduce taxation. The line of new Chancellors of the Exchequer is to say, 'Look at my term of office! My predecessor put on five millions; I will put on fifteen millions. My little finger shall be bigger than his loin.' That is their claim to immortality. It is necessary to take a Chancellor of the Exchequer—in a parliamentary sense—by the throat, and by refusing to continue these burdens to force him to reduce expenditure." Where could be found a more apt criticism of the methods of Mr Lloyd George himself? The truth is, that industrial peace will never again be enjoyed in this country unless and until far more certain continuity of employment is secured for British industrialists than can ever be possible under the economic conditions which exist to-day. Lord Salisbury, speaking at Hastings on May 18, 1892, exposed the fundamental fallacy which underlies our present fiscal system with singular lucidity. "Forty or fifty years ago everybody believed that Free Trade had conquered the world, and they prophesied that every nation would follow the example of England and give itself up to absolute Free Trade. The results are not exactly what they prophesied, but the more adverse the results were, the

more the devoted prophets of Free Trade declared that all would come right at last; the worse the tariffs of foreign countries became, the more confident were the prophecies of an early victory. But we see now, after many years' experience, that, explain it how we may, foreign nations are raising, one after another, a wall, a larger wall, of protection around their shores, which excludes us from their markets, and, so far as they are concerned, do their best to kill our trade. We live in an age of a war of tariffs. Every nation is trying how it can, by agreement with its neighbour, get the greatest possible protection for its own industries, and, at the same time, the greatest possible access to the markets of its neighbours. This kind of negotiation is continually going on. It has been going on for the last year and a half with great activity. I want to point out to you that what I observe is that A is very anxious to get a favour of B, and B is anxious to get a favour of C, but nobody cares two straws about getting the commercial favour of Great Britain. What is the reason of that? It is that in this great battle *Great Britain has deliberately stripped herself of the armour and the weapons by which the battle has to be fought.* You cannot do business in this world of evil on those terms. If you go to market you must bring money with you; if you fight you must fight with the weapons with which those you have to contend with are fighting. It is not easy for you to say, 'I am a Quaker, I do not fight at all, I have no weapon,' and to expect that people will pay the same regard to you and be as anxious to obtain your goodwill and to consult your interests as they will be of the people who have retained their armour and still hold their weapons. The weapon with which they all fight is admission to their own markets—that is to say, A says to B, 'If you will make your duties such that I can sell in your market, I will make my duties such that you can sell in my market.' But we begin by saying, 'We will levy no duties on anybody,' and we declare that it would be contrary and disloyal to the glorious and sacred doctrine of Free Trade to levy any duty on anybody for the sake of what we can get by it. It may be noble, but it is not business. On these terms you will get nothing, and I am sorry to have to tell you that you are practically getting nothing."

Was not Mr Bonar Law abundantly justified when he stated on July 27, 1912, that "the greatest of all social reforms—a reform which would not so much benefit the working classes directly as enable them to help themselves—would be *a rise in the general level of wages throughout the country.*" But, he added, "a general rise in the level of wages is only possible when there is an increased demand for labour, and there can only be an increase in that demand after there is an increase in our productive capacity. Such an

increase is, in my belief, impossible until we have given to our workmen the advantages enjoyed by every one of our competitors. Our fiscal system is condemned by the universal experience of mankind. Throughout the whole world you will not find to-day any country so poor as to do it reverence." The people of this country, however, are exhorted to maintain the present system because, in Mr Churchill's view, "the idea of filching a million or two from neighbouring nations is contemptible, if not absurd"; and because, "if you increase prosperity in this country by tariff reform, you increase it by throwing people out of employment in other countries. You are becoming prosperous by the misery of others" (Mr E. G. Hemmerde, M.P., Feb. 8, 1909). But is charity no longer to begin at home? Unionists, at any rate, conceive it to be the duty of British statesmen to put the interests of their own countrymen before the commercial prosperity of their foreign competitors! It is not the right to work, but the opportunity of finding work, which at the present time is denied to so many skilled workers in this country. And if the material and social condition of industrialists in this country would be improved by a change of fiscal economy—and it has been demonstrated times out of number that this would be so,—it is surely the duty of all politicians to use their utmost endeavours to effect a revision of the tariff, however greatly such a course would inconvenience the inhabitants of foreign countries.

When once the meaning of social reform is understood, a test is found ready to hand by means of which the value of social programmes may be safely gauged, and unless the particular policy under consideration tends to promote the efficiency and independence of the people, it cannot be a measure of true social reform. Let British workmen be once secured in their employment, and increased capacity and independence of character will surely follow, to their own and their country's lasting benefit. Tried by this test, the social policy of Progressives will assuredly prove abortive, while the social policy of Unionists will as certainly be found big with blessings for the people. It is the duty of Unionists not only to think out for themselves the principles which must underlie all true social reform, but to offer to the electors the fruits of their investigations. Let the people be made to understand what the rival policies which are before the country really mean, and let the electors judge between them. Unionists may abide the result with equanimity. *Magna est veritas et prævalebit.*

ARTHUR PAGE.

THE PIRATES OF LEAMCON.

THE buccaneers immortalised by Marryat and Stevenson are for the most part ruffians with keen wits and keener knives, who prey upon the helpless and avoid the strong. In dire straits they may show teeth to a gunboat, but it is all over in the presence of a frigate. Not so with the pirates of Leamcon. In their case the loftier the enterprise the greater the relish. So far from shrinking from the king's vessels, they dared to treat on something approaching equal terms even with the king himself. Yet, so far as the writer is aware, no one has attempted to set out with any fulness the part which these sea-rovers played, nor have we any description of their home. The historians of James I.'s reign do indeed draw from the State Papers frequent allusions to their power and their depredations. This, however, is but slender tribute to the historical *rôle* of men who at one time could muster a fleet of as many as twenty ships, fully manned and thoroughly equipped, and who in the early years of the seventeenth century held undisturbed an almost impregnable stronghold in the south-west of Ireland.

Pirates are more interested in licence and loot than in annals, and they are under no delusions as to the consequences which are prone to follow when the light of publicity falls too plentifully upon them. The Leamcon pirates, however, have compelled others to place many of their doings on record; they were a source of the gravest anxiety to the potentates of the day, and even the stilted language of official correspondence not infrequently betrays the tremor which they caused.

The passion for the sea and plunder, which took origin in the exploits of sailors like Drake and Frobisher, became general when the gigantic Armada was seen flying before the English ships. Financed by wealthy merchants and officered by the great houses, ship after ship sailed with the Queen's commission for the Spanish main. But the spirit of adventure thus let loose soon degenerated. The Spanish main was distant, and its prizes no easy prey; why not descend upon less doughty quarry nearer home?

So long as the vigorous rule of Elizabeth lasted pirates were rare; but when the laxer times of James succeeded, adventurers of the baser sort breathed freely, and organised bands began to scourge the narrow seas. Up and down the English Channel, through the Irish Sea, and all round the coasts of Ireland, they ranged and ravaged, paying scant attention to possible danger from his Majesty's ships, and losing no opportunity of attacking all merchantmen that came their

way. Finally, so bold did they become that it was decided to seize and occupy a permanent base on land. For this purpose the peninsula of Leamcon was selected, with results which abundantly demonstrated the wisdom of the choice. There for something like a quarter of a century the pirates succeeded in setting the king's frowns at defiance, and when at last they condescended to withdraw, the step was rather the result of bargaining than of force.

The most casual glance at the map of the south of Ireland suggests ideal spots for pirate haunts. The long deep inlets, thick studded with islands, promise the nicest facilities for the game of hide-and-seek, with every prospect of the hiders including all the winners. In the extreme south-west, between Cape Clear and the Mizen Head, the sea breaks up through "Carbery's Hundred Isles," making what is suggestively termed Roaring Water Bay. If nothing more than difficulty of access and security had been the object, many a hidden creek and sheltering islet lay available in the recesses of the bay. But the pirates of James I.'s time thought less of a hidden than of a strong position, and they were at least as anxious with reference to their own facilities for running out, as they were for intricacies which would make it difficult for others to run in. Hence they decided to keep well out near the entrance to the bay, and the site finally chosen was Leamcon.

At the eastern approach to Tourmore Bay, Castle Point projects. Itself almost an island, it forms the western extremity of a peninsula some two and a half miles long by half a mile broad. The name Leamcon, or the Dog's Leap, by which the place is known, perhaps takes origin from a chasm which cuts off the Point. In this peninsula the pirates made their home. On the north-west, running inland for three-quarters of a mile, lies the harbour. A small island partially shelters its entrance. At first sight it seems to be a somewhat exposed, but in other respects a quite innocent roadstead. Appearances, however, are deceptive, for the exposure is by no means serious, and the innocence is much on a par with that of the Nuremberg Maiden. Castle Point is protected by a *cheval-de-frise* of sunken rocks, and not only is Leamcon harbour "one of the dirtiest bottoms known," but the whole water is a maze of sunken rocks.

Leamcon is further strengthened by the rugged and inaccessible cliffs, in places over one hundred feet high, which guard the southern coast of the peninsula. Only at its eastern end do these diminish, and here the pirates erected a fort to prevent landing, and to guard the entrance to the inlet which forms the north-east boundary. To this day the promontory is called Gun Point.

Almost impregnable from the sea, Leamcon was nearly as difficult of approach from land.

Anything more suitable for the embarrassment of an attacking force it would be difficult to imagine. For miles as you draw near there is scarcely a level spot. Sudden rises and convenient hollows, overhanging rocks and troublesome defiles, everywhere seem as though planned for an endless succession of ambuscades; and the general trend of the ground, which rises from all sides to a central watch-tower, would enable the defence to be controlled, and directed with a precision and unexpectedness which would prove fatal to anything except overwhelming numbers.

The entrance to the Leamcon peninsula is a slender isthmus. To-day it is perhaps three hundred yards wide, but when the pirates ruled, it was rather of the nature of a narrow rocky causeway. At the opposite side the ground, or rather the rock, rises rapidly. The capture of that position would be tantamount to rushing a bridge directly commanded by a fortress.

Finally, supposing an invader to have prevailed thus far (none ever did), the castle would still remain, strong, stern, and most difficult of access. Having fought his way over broken ground, overhanging steep and lofty cliffs for nearly a mile, till seemingly within spring of the castle, he would find himself on the brink of a sharp precipice, fifty feet deep, and high above him, on the opposite side of the dividing chasm, would frown the strongly-guarded entrance. Except for a natural bridge of rock, so narrow that not more than two assailants could cross it abreast, the islet on which the castle stands is completely cut off from the peninsula.

It will be readily understood how the strength of such a position and the resources of its occupiers ensured a general immunity from attack, and the scanty provision made for guarding the seas made it easy for the pirates to cruise in every direction.

James I. was not long king before the pirates began to realise their opportunities. In the summer of 1605 we find the Deputy, Sir Arthur Chichester, complaining that pirates hinder all trade upon the Irish coasts, a state of affairs which he attributes to the withdrawal of the necessary protection.

We get a glimpse soon after into the class of men with whom the authorities had to deal. "Captain Conello" was surprised and taken while cruising in a small barque off Wexford. He and some of his companions are described as "notable offenders." At the time of capture they were returning laden with spoils from Barnstaple. On a former occasion they had got into trouble for a similar raid upon the goods of the merchants of Exeter. Under the circumstances very abject submission might have been expected, coupled with any possible guarantees of future good conduct. But Conello displayed wrath instead of penitence, and his threats of

vengeance upon the captors and their neighbours would seem to have caused real alarm. Perhaps Conello had some ground for his hauteur and effrontery. When in Exeter jail for his previous offence, and expected to meet his deserts on the gallows, he had been saved by the mediation of a highly-placed official. There is no sign that he had any friends in Ireland, and the Deputy sincerely desired to make of him an example. Sir Arthur, however, found himself face to face with two formidable obstacles. Conello was a man of education, a distinction still so rare as to possess peculiar privileges. When the question of procedure came up, the judges were of opinion that he "would be admitted his cleargie," which, as he could read well, meant that his life would be safe. Against this technicality the determination of the Deputy prevailed. Realising that if Conello could mock at justice, honest merchantmen would be afraid to put to sea, he obtained from the "Advisers of law" an opinion to the effect that "benefit of book should not be admitted to offenders of this kind." The second obstacle was less easily surmounted. The sword of Irish justice struck as it pleased, or perhaps we should say as it could, on land, but it was powerless at sea. Until a remedy could be applied the pirates who played havoc with Irish commerce must be sent to England for trial. There was no course open for Sir Arthur but to seek "the severity of the law" amid the uncertainties of an English court. As to the sequel the State Papers are silent, but from other sources there is reason to believe that here also Sir Arthur prevailed, and Conello was hanged.

During the next few years the resources and the audacity of the pirates increased with startling speed. We no longer read of "small barques." They took the seas with vessels that were able to outsail and outmatch the king's ships. When, by any means open to them, the authorities succeeded in making a capture, they were extremely glad to employ the pirates' boats on their own side. Sometimes, as we shall see, they could not resist the temptation of employing the pirates themselves: men who could sail as they did, and with such intimate knowledge of the coasts, were much to be desired in the king's navy.

The pirates' methods of living were extremely simple: they waylaid and captured ships and cargoes all round the coasts. The crews, as a rule, were allowed to go free. The ships, if suitable, were kept; if not, with their cargoes they were disposed of to best advantage. Purchasers were never a difficulty in those lawless days. Not only at the coast, but in many distant and some surprising quarters, buyers were plentiful.

For the purposes of barter Leamcon proved a valuable emporium. The smallest possible amount of shaping was needed to fashion the rocks,

which rise abruptly from the deep water of the harbour, into convenient quays. Those natural landing-places tell their tale even to this day. Many of the pirates settled their wives and families upon the peninsula, and so formed a trading nucleus.

In return for the goods, and the money which the pirates lavished freely, the landsmen of the locality kept them well supplied with all that they required. Many and various were the efforts made by the authorities to suppress this traffic; but the "land pirates," as they were termed, set them at defiance. They had, as we shall see, substantial reason for concluding that official threats often carried more sound than meaning.

From time to time the pirate supplies were obtained in a still more elementary way. Then, as now, there was much fish to be acquired in Irish waters, and fishing fleets came from England for the season. This was the pirates' opportunity; the provisions carefully prepared for the coming and going of the fishermen were exactly suitable to their requirements. Whenever they could waylay a fishing-boat they appropriated everything she carried. "This year," writes one of the king's officers in 1606, "the pirates robbed more than a hundred sail, and sent them empty home."

But what, it will be asked, were the king's Deputy, and that highly-titled official, the President of Munster, doing to allow such defiance of the law? Where were the king's officers and the king's ships?

A single battleship, the *Tremontagne*, was all that was available during the early years of James I. She had formerly been supported by two smaller ships, but these were withdrawn. In all departments frugality, or rather parsimony, was the order. The Deputy was often desperate for lack of funds, and had to borrow where he could. The pay promised was on an economical scale. Even when the difference in prices between then and now is remembered, 5*s.* a-day was not wealth for an officer who held Admiral's rank. Only too often months passed during which no pay was forthcoming for either officers or crew. It was no wonder that the king's representatives felt themselves unable to deal effectively with the growing evil.

They felt their position acutely, the more so because the Privy Council were continually ordering and urging the suppression of piracy. Thus we find the Deputy begging in 1607 for an adequate supply of king's ships, and complaining that without them they have to make use of "sorry ships," and have recourse to "paltry stratagems."

The account of one of these stratagems has survived, and its sequel is instructive. One summer day in 1607 a smart-looking vessel sailed into Youghal harbour. Presently it transpired that she was a privateer, commanded by one Captain Coward. There appears to have been no attempt

whatever at concealment. Why should there be? Coward wanted supplies, and knew he could get them; the port authorities to all appearance had no means at their disposal for interfering with his plans. Thus it happened that when two innocent-looking barques drew quietly alongside, no suspicions were aroused; all the visible crews consisted of a few hands, barely enough to navigate and to handle the cargoes of provisions with which they were supposed to be laden. Scarcely, however, were the barques made fast when the hatches suddenly flew open, and disclosed holds full of determined men, armed to the teeth. Panic-stricken at a display of energy and force so utterly unexpected, the pirates made little resistance, and Coward was safely lodged in jail.

Such isolated pieces of information as occur afterwards, with reference to Captain Coward, make sufficiently curious reading. There are four glimpses. First, a trial before the Chief Baron: result, no conviction, because there was "no charge against Coward of offences committed within land and not on the main sea"; which means that his piracies were flagrant, but because he had been honest on shore, Irish law could not reach him. Next, Coward appears in the employment of Lord Thomond, Chief Commissioner of Munster! Skilled pilots were not easily found, and the Captain's proficiency in the line was known —only too well. Thirdly, we see our pirate laid by the heels in H.M.S. *Lion's Whelp*. The Lords of the Council, indignant at his "acquittal or escape," and outraged at his Government employment, had censured Sir Arthur Chichester, now become Lord-Lieutenant, and ordered Coward's immediate transmission to England. Finally, all comes as before, only in heightened colours. Once more Coward is a dangerous pirate; he had been pardoned in hope of amendment. Once more he is arrested and on his way to trial; but so far is he from any disposition to strike his colours that he *demands* pardon, under threat of the most wholesale reprisals from his fellows, and the demand is endorsed by Sir Arthur Chichester, because he knows no means of preventing the pirates from putting their threats into execution.

The explanation of this amazing advice from the king's representative is to be found in the equally amazing condition of the seas. The power of the pirates had been increasing with the most alarming rapidity; their isolated ships had developed into thoroughly organised fleets. So widespread were their devastations that they had come to be known as "the common enemies of society." Fortifications in the Leamcon neighbourhood, stern proclamations against "the traffic with these caterpillars," the despatch of troops to the infected districts, an attempt to starve out West Cork by prohibiting all corn supplies, and above all, the continuous de-

mand for more and better ships of war,—such are some of the proposals which the State Papers contain. But most of the plans either took no shape at all or proved immediately abortive. Leamcon remained "a common receptacle" for pirates, and many other Munster harbours were found by them to be not only "commodious" but "safe."

Growing bolder as their numbers increased and their equipment improved, the pirate captains began to cruise openly, as they pleased. In the autumn of 1608 there were three of them waiting for victims in the neighbourhood of Leamcon. The old *Tremontagne*, ordered up to the attack, made feints at interfering with their manœuvres, but was easily eluded. Next year the fleet, still further strengthened, was similarly engaged. One of their ships is described as strong enough to land 300 men. As a result the hearts of the community at Leamcon were gladdened by the sight of a richly-freighted ship from Amsterdam. She had been no easy capture. "The States," as the pirates were destined to discover, were foes of a different kind from the faltering officials of King James. The fight had been fierce; no less than sixty of the pirates had fallen. How the Dutch crew fared we are not told.

Success so signal bore fruit. The badly-paid soldiers of the king deserted their colours and sought the easily gotten riches of the sea. Land piracy also prospered. So real were the attractions that a regular trade sprang up, and now it was not alone the natives that were concerned. Adventurers come freely, even from England, and settle down to the work of distribution. Small wonder!—the profits were extravagantly great and the risk exceeding small. For the next few years the pirates literally ruled the seas. The Leamcon fleet numbered eleven ships, and in the case of threatened attack they could muster as many more. They moved in squadrons, acting under the supreme command of their "Admiral," one Busshopp, a man of wide experience and acknowledged capacity. The ships they used were swift; they handled them with consummate skill; the crews were numerous and eager; the armament and equipment generally the best that discriminating discernment and funds unlimited could supply.

There was nothing from which the pirates shrank. The President of Munster had State business of importance in England, but the formidable pirate cruisers made the sea impossible. The Deputy's young wife coming to join her husband was hotly pursued, and it was with difficulty her ship succeeded in escaping. A strongly-manned treasure-ship of the London Companies only contrived to reach Coleraine after a most determined and dangerous chase. In most cases there was no escape. Richly-freighted London barques, Spanish caravels, French merchant-

men, Dutch, Danish, Hamburg ships,—all alike fell victims. So bold and regardless of consequences did the pirates become that, in the opinion of the time, they "would not leave the gates of hell unripped open in search of gain."

The formidable size of the Leamcon fleet, and the exceptional strength of the resources which the "Admiral" could command, will explain in part some of the irregularities which confront us when we come to inquire into the way the authorities faced the common enemy. If we cannot attempt the defence of the courses they pursued, we may at least admit the presence of many extenuating circumstances.

In reply to the expostulations of the Privy Council, the Lord-Lieutenant tells them that under present circumstances "to keep pirates from increase is impossible," and he adds the astounding statement that it is a common custom for king's officers "to take the goods of pirates, and suffer their persons to escape to bring in more booty."

Certainly very strange things were done, and very important people were implicated. One of the king's naval captains, in the neighbourhood of Leamcon, on being censured for not attacking a pirate, defended himself on the plea that he was "overmatched." But it was discovered that twenty chests of sugar and four of coral, which had belonged to the pirate, were now in his possession, and no satisfactory explanation of the transference was forthcoming! One of the mayors of Wexford appears as a kind of sleeping-partner in connection with a series of piracies. The Vice-Admiral himself is reported for "flaunting the authority" of the Lord-Lieutenant, and "embezzling" pirated goods. Well may Sir Arthur Chichester complain against "persons in place" who neglect their duty, and permit "disorder and abuses." Well may he crave the much-needed power to try and execute pirates who "vex and disturb more than can be understood by others than them that feel it."

Matters were in truth in a somewhat desperate condition in the years 1611 and 1612. On sea the naval authorities had no force which could or would cope with the pirates. On land the Lord-Lieutenant felt himself powerless to suppress the illicit traffic. The only efficacious policy now, he tells the Privy Council, would be "to lay waste the coasts and isles, and garrison every creek." As this was plainly impracticable, he gave it as his opinion that nothing remained but to treat with the pirates, in order to induce them to accept pardon, and renounce their lawless life.

On the first occasion when proposals of this kind were brought under the notice of the Privy Council they were received, as might be expected, with a proper display of indignation. In 1608 the President of Munster had been censured for attempting to treat with notorious pirates. But times

were changed in 1612, and now it seemed as if the settlement of the question of treating and pardon would lie far more with the pirates than with the king.

When the idea of pardon begins to be entertained, we find those intrusted with the negotiations being warned as to the danger of letting the pirates know their power. The pirates knew it only too well, and in consequence they showed themselves on many occasions wholly indifferent to the king's pardon. Even when they did condescend to parley, it was in a singularly high-handed style. For instance, Baugh, one of the Leamcon community, having agreed to "accept" pardon, engaged in a farewell series of forays upon English and French vessels, and thereby increased his provision for retirement by a sum of £2000.

As a solution for the difficulties of the situation, the English Government devised a policy which did more honour to their ingenuity than to their sense of their country's dignity. It was imperatively necessary that the power of the pirates should be broken. Their settlement at Leamcon made King James responsible for their doings. So inclusive and impartial were their captures, that the ambassadors of all the Courts in Northern Europe were kept busy pressing and insisting on claims for reparation. Manifestly it was the duty of the Government to equip and despatch a fleet strong enough to master the pirates and compel the evacuation of Leamcon. There was, however, little glory to be gained from such an enterprise: it would certainly be costly; it might prove dangerous.

Accordingly the Council felt about for some more cautious if less honourable mode of procedure, and the thought occurred — Why not employ the Dutch?

The States had suffered severely from the ravages of the pirates. Their fleet was strong and splendidly equipped; if they were admitted into British waters, their captains would enter with zest upon the pursuit of the pirates' ships, and think themselves amply rewarded by being permitted to share in the pirates' wealth.

As against an arrangement so simple there was, of course, the discredit of invoking outsiders to deal with British subjects. There is not much sense of dignity in a Government which confesses inability to provide its own police. Arguments of this kind, however, if urged, did not prevail, and the States were invited to take the leading part in the suppression of piracy, permission being given to sail where they pleased, not even the harbours being exempt.

From the time of this agreement the story of the pirates of Leamcon enters upon a new phase. We hear no more of fleets strong enough to stand at defiance and to dictate their own terms. Ships continue to be taken and lawless deeds are

common, but they are rather the result of individual enterprise than of concerted action. Leamcon continues to be valuable and convenient for the disposal of booty, but its garrison is no longer strong; hence its treasures are either securely hidden or rapidly dispersed, and there is little inducement for an attacking force to brave the dangers of its formidable natural defences. Pirates and piracies do not come to an end because the Dutch flag flies in English waters, but the methods pursued alter. Daring deeds are still done when opportunity offers, but as a rule secret dealings and rapid flights prevail.

It followed that there was much more readiness to treat for pardons if they could be had on anything like reasonable terms. The pirate's life at best could never be a happy one. Grim stories of their mutual mistrust and internecine conflicts might be pieced together from the State Papers. If there was one man more than another whose authority and the acknowledged capacity with which he used it might have commended the life, that man was Busshopp, the Admiral of the Leamcon fleet. Yet he has left it on record that he would "rather die from labours in his own country than live the richest pirate in the world." Now that the position of quasi-independence was gone, and their rule of the seas was at an end, the prospect of a safe withdrawal became alluring.

Nor were the authorities at all backward about entering into negotiations. The only serious difficulty appears to have been the amount the pardon was to cost. No doubt it was aggravating for naval officers and others to find the Dutch coming in and carrying off spoil which a more spirited and more liberal administration would have placed within their reach. Hence not unnaturally there developed a very keen desire to acquire, by negotiations, at least some of the wealth which could not be secured by force, and many were the plans suggested for dealing with the pirates, either individually or *en masse*.

As a specimen of these schemes and their colour, the proposal of the Lord Deputy, Lord Falkland, in 1624, arrests attention. Pirates were still numerous, and there remained the same unwillingness on the part of the Crown to provide the force necessary for their suppression. The Deputy, however, had obtained control over certain agents whose influence looked promising. They were not exactly the class of people we should expect to find in the confidence of the king's representative—he admits that they "dare not show in England." They enjoyed, however, the advantage of free access to the pirates, and by their means it seemed possible that a scheme of settlement might be completed.

Briefly put, the scheme invited the pirates to "accept pardon" and settle down in Ireland. Such had been the

havoc they had wrought on English property, that there could be no possibility of finding a haven of peace for them on the other side of St George's Channel. With Ireland it was different. There they would seem to have had more friends than foes, so that nothing seemed likely to prevent their taking up residence and enjoying their wealth on Irish soil. So enthusiastic, indeed, was the Deputy over the prospect, that he even looked forward to utilising the warlike instincts of his interesting settlers by employing them against the king's foes.

The scheme is amazing enough, even if it went no further, but what are we to say of the special arguments which were, for Lord Falkland, its chief recommendation?

In the first draft there is a significant hint as to "remembering the interests of the Admiral." When we become aware that the Lord High Admiral of England at this time was "Steenie," the notorious Duke of Buckingham, we are ready for the richly coloured details which appear when the outlines are filled in. This viceregal scheme for a plantation of pirates is intended to be pleasingly profitable in many directions. The king is to be attracted in a general way by the increase of his revenues, presumably from the taxes of these rich and loyal subjects; but more particular guerdons are to arrive at the doors of various highly placed personages. A sum of £20,000 is considered appropriate for His Highness the Prince of Wales; the Lord Admiral is to incur no trouble or responsibility, but he will be asked to open his pockets graciously for the reception of a matter of £10,000. The Deputy himself will not refuse the £5000 which is to be his own share, and so the list goes on.

No doubt the various high personages concerned were deeply interested in a scheme so simple and promising. Unhappily the pirates do not appear to have been equally accommodating. They continued to evince an obstinate preference for enjoying their wealth after their own fashion, and Lord Falkland's scheme of wholesale settlement and high bribery collapsed.

That the pirates of Leamcon were still able to give substantial account of themselves will be gathered from some episodes which happened in the decade which succeeded the rejection of the Deputy's proposals. The attentions of the Dutch Fleet continued, and the ways of these maritime transgressors had been made harder by the passing of Acts which armed the Irish authorities with the plenary power they desired. Nevertheless piracy, if much more dangerous, was not less profitable when successful, and the extraordinary insufficiency, not to say the incapacity, of the king's forces, left openings in abundance. The voyage to England from any of the Munster ports continued to be

a hazardous enterprise. Thus the great Lord Cork, in 1625, so little trusted such naval protection as was available that he actually paid £40 to a "Biscaynor," *aliter* Biscay pirate, for acting as convoy. Notwithstanding—or should we say as a consequence of?—this unconstitutional precaution, his lordship's ships were pursued, and in spite of the Biscaynor's exertions, real or feigned, he had the mortification of seeing one of them captured.

Particularly daring were the exploits of Nutt, a pirate who appears to have made full use of the facilities afforded by Leamcon. It was a time when the king was being served even worse than usual. No officer of any real merit had emerged during all this pirate time, and throughout corruption was rife. But it is something new to read an official complaint of one captain, to the effect that, while not without merit when he can be got to sea, he is usually characterised by an inordinate "affection for harbour"; and of another, that he seems "neither able nor willing to serve the king." Nutt appears to have been furnished with very accurate information as to the calibre of his opponents. We hear of him first in the open waters for which Leamcon formed so convenient a base. There he made some successful captures, and thus gorged was willing to "accept pardon" if the authorities would "accept" £2000 in return. As the offer was not sufficiently tempting, when the needs of all who would claim a share were considered, negotiations were broken off, and Nutt returned to his calling. Learning that harbour disease was prevalent, and that the king's ships were busily occupied with a quiet course of repairs, he sailed boldly through St George's Channel and up the Irish Sea. The events which ensued were as extraordinary as they were scandalous. Nutt came right opposite to the mouth of the Liffey, and captured ship after ship in the open. His audacity was unbounded. Meeting on one occasion with an exceptionally fast barque, he with difficulty got within gunshot, as she neared the protection of Howth. The scene was one of intense excitement. When close under the cliffs, the pirate, master of all the tricks of the coast, cut in between the chase and safety, and there, in the immediate presence among many others of Lord Howth himself, the ship was taken. Merchants and citizens were alike terror-stricken. They knew that the king's ship in charge of the Irish Sea was absent, and that they were powerless. As for Nutt, he remained until he was sated, and then sailed away unmolested.

Equally discreditable to all in the king's service were the doings of the pirate Campaine —a veritable prince among buccaneers. From the time when he first comes under notice in 1824 till his disappearance in a blaze of

festivity some years later, Campaine breaks in again and again, always on the grand scale—bold, commanding, elusive,—a veritable hero in comparison with the venal crew, who are always on the watch for an opportunity to exploit him.

In the autumn of 1624 we see him making the harbour of Leamcon. He is under no apprehension as to his reception. With him comes a prize of quite exceptional importance and value. The fame of this possession and of Campaine's personal wealth has spread until even the Deputy hears it. A potentate so richly endowed is entitled, if not to a cordial welcome, at least to respectful, most respectful, attention.

Accordingly, the representative of law and order waits upon Campaine as he brings to, and tenders him the "protection" of the representative of the king. He is careful to explain that the "protection" will have no value should the Dutch dare to attack by sea, but should they land it will be found possible to have troops in readiness for their reception.

Captain Campaine is quite satisfied with these friendly assurances, and he proceeds promptly to deal with the immediate business on hand—his prize. Very practical is the interest taken in her cargo: pepper and camphor are there in quantity, much barley, a full supply of hides, also lead: in all, particularly in the spices, there is much to attract; but fever-heat would seem to have been reached in those noble stores of tobacco, and the exceptionally fine Hollands which she contained.

And the customers! There remains a long list of them, and they are not of the class usually associated with stolen goods. As for the lesser names, let them remain in oblivion, sunk, like Campaine's prize when he had emptied her, in the mysteries of Leamcon Harbour. Enough for our purpose to note that among the largest purchasers were the Deputy's representative, Sir William Hull, and the Deputy himself, to whom some large cartloads were assigned!

So far all well,—the Deputy and his shadows have got their goods, Captain Campaine has got his gold; but who is to accomplish the retransfer of a proper proportion of the gold into official pockets, in return for official pardon, and official licence to enjoy the residue undisturbed?

The Deputy grows restless with expectation. When is Campaine going to respond duly to that "protection" whose chief function was to offer facilities for treating and the purchase of pardon? Campaine has made highly profitable use of the "protection" in his own interest: when are the claims of the Deputy and his friends to receive attention?

The answer, when it does come, after about four months' delay, is quite magnificent.

Captain Campaine is in no hurry to retire, and he is in-

different as to the king's pardon. He neither waits upon the Deputy himself nor does he even write. He merely deputes his servant to say that he would like the "protection" enlarged till all his business at Leamcon is completed. This done, he proposes to take the seas once more, but he promises to come back and bring his booty with him next summer, when no doubt a similarly good reception may be expected at Leamcon — and then he will perhaps treat for pardon.

The way this message was received at Dublin Castle marks the lowest depth yet reached. There was a flash of indignation—but only a flash. There were frothy words and hollow orders for the summoning of the fleet, but there is nothing to show that the orders were ever intended to be obeyed. On the contrary, Sir William Hull receives authority to grant all that the pirate asks, provided the claims of the Deputy are remembered. £10,000 is the price Lord Falkland places on the pardon, of which £500 is to be paid at once. This done, the "protection" may be enlarged. Campaine may sail and spoil as he will, excepting only the king's subjects, and when he returns once more his pardon will be ready—only let Sir William Hull make it quite clear that £10,000 is the least sum possible in consideration of Campaine's importance and the Deputy's gracious clemency.

Captain Campaine found no reason to complain of the turn events had taken. Whether he paid the £500 we do not know; he certainly seems never to have contemplated parting with £10,000—but he very graciously accepted the enlarged protection, and deliberately completed his preparations. Then with a graceful farewell he sailed away, leaving Sir William Hull behind wondering when he would return.

In the sense that Sir William and the Deputy desired, Captain Campaine never came back. Some months later a naval captain reported that he was "hovering about," and did what he could to bring him to "pardon." All through the autumn tidings of his coming were expected anxiously — in vain. A year passes before he is again at Leamcon. Forthwith a "protection" to last thirty days is proclaimed, and a safe-conduct is given to enable the captain to come to Dublin and treat with the Deputy face to face. Campaine enjoys and uses the "protection"; he makes no use of the safe-conduct,—on the contrary, when it suits he is off to sea again, and the baffled Deputy, in excusing himself to Buckingham for the absence of his share of the £10,000, has to suggest that fear of the king's ships has put Campaine to flight.

If Lord Falkland yielded to the temptation of imagining that this prince of pirates was overawed by himself or any other, he was destined to be rudely undeceived.

In the spring of 1627 comes

news that Campaine with some three or four ships, one of them of 500 tons burden, and carrying forty guns, has been busy at Killybegs, in Co. Donegal. So lavish is he of his wealth—that wealth the Lord-Deputy vainly longed to share—that in a few days he has spent perhaps £1500 in Barbary ducats and Spanish silver. So appreciative is Killybegs of his splendour that a great banquet has been given in his honour there, under the auspices of the High Constable and the Minister. Campaine's good health was enthusiastically drunk, and he afterwards sailed away to enjoy his wealth undiminished by the impecuniosity of Lord Falkland or the Duke of Buckingham.

One more reference to Leamcon is found in the State Papers of the period. It seems to epitomise the situation in the early years of Charles I. "I live," says the writer, who is seeking from one of the Secretaries of State benefits for which, after the manner of the time, he is willing to pay, "in a remote part of Ireland, in a strong castle." The castle is the castle of Leamcon, and the writer Sir William Hull! What brought him there? Was it a zeal for the suppression of pirates so burning that it scorched them out of their stronghold? In answering, think of Campaine and his prize, of Sir William Hull and his negotiations, and say if this letter from the strong castle of Leamcon does not stamp Sir William as the most successful "land pirate" of his period.

H. KINGSMILL MOORE.

NUNZIATA.

RICHARD BURGOYNE, recently made Fellow of his college at Oxford, was spending the long vacation in Calabria, a wanderer afoot among primitive folk.

Making halt for a few days in a certain village not far away from Cosenza, he had speedily won a measure of admiring curiosity. These Bruttii, these descendants of the men who fought for freedom under Spartacus, are shy of strangers. But here was a mad Englishman — very mad, yet sympathetic. A milord or prince in his own land, if you judged by his bearing and generosity. Or, to hear him speak, at least a foreigner, perhaps from Milan, and sent by the king to collect amulets against misfortune at suitable prices. At all events, one who listened eagerly to whatever you could tell him about the Evil Eye, and knew how to deal with such matters. For did he not always say "fora fascino" when he praised a child, or anything of yours? Whereby he relieved you from looking aside and spitting upon the ground, or offering him it, lest perchance he should blight it by his covetousness.

They were halcyon days that Burgoyne spent in his mountain village. He could add a fly-leaf of notes to the Catullus of Robinson Ellis about a superstition that was common to Chinese and Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. It was good to lodge with smiling Maria, whose house took your fancy at once by its comparative neatness, when you had crossed the bridge and were climbing towards the little church on the crest of the hill. Dazzling white, it flung back the glowing sun, or was garlanded to the roof-top by the luxuriant vine. You mounted the stairway, and presently made out, in the abrupt obscurity, Maria's loom, her rude and scanty articles of furniture, her perspiring water-jars, her staged crockery and hanging melons that serve, when pulp and seeds are gone, for a thousand uses. In the heat of mid-day, what was more amusing than to hold her "bambini" under the spell by a few tricks of conjuring; merry crickets, these children of hers, and free from all trammels of civilisation? For they and their playmates, boys and girls alike, wore but a shift apiece, and a medal or shell, or end of shaped horn, against the "malocchio." And then, as the shadows lengthened, it was pleasant to stroll down the winding road and pass the broad-browed oxen dragging wains whose shape has not changed since the days of Virgil. For the sunset-hour, one perched upon the ledge of the break-neck bridge that spans the Caronte,—the Acheron that, hard below, plunges into the chasm of the Busento, in whose bed the Goths buried Alaric and all his treasure.

Or, in the village, you watched stalwart peasants flinging the discus in antique fashion, and joined the onlookers who gathered round some improvised dance. And the night closed in with serenades, the drone of the bagpipes, the dry beat and rattle of the tambourine.

But Burgoyne had set his heart upon exploring the recesses of La Sila, or at least of reaching the heights of Acquafredda. Good Maria, learning this, touched his coat and kissed his hand, as Calabrians use in solemn moments. She feared for him. La Sila, from all time, was the haunt of brigands. But she got nothing but laughter from Burgoyne. He knew that she and her gossips had no ill opinion of these same brigands. What were they but poor souls who slung their guns about their shoulders and took to the mountains, because the murrain had swept away their flocks, or a dry season had scorched their patches of maize? Home-staying folk, far from being horror-stricken, equally pitied and admired the bold adventurers, wished them luck, and saw to the timely administration of supplies. What of those crosses, he asked Maria, set upon spots where they had fallen victims, since society and the will of the king would have it so? And had he not caught her kissing her youngest child, and calling him "mother's little brigand" by way of excuse for still newer and more rapturous kisses?

Besides, as he assured her, there were but two or three poor wretches of the sort in all Sila, and these had been driven away to the other side of the mountain. It was no longer the 'Sixties, when the new government was hated, and all good Calabrians prayed for the return of the Bourbon. The days of Lo Monaco and Cardinal Ruffo were long gone by. The peaceful traveller need not fear that any Cipriano La Gala should roast him alive at a slow fire. His relatives would not have to look for an ear of his, tied up in a parcel, if they ventured to delay the sending of a full ransom. No: Maria might take good heart. Nowadays the Calabrian, luckless or landless—and too often he is one or the other,—turns his thoughts to America rather than to the wilds of Sila. With dry eyes he embraces his nearest and dearest, and makes for El Dorado, in the hope some day to return with that which shall ensure the freedom they love. Was it not so?

Ah, of a truth, Maria knew it only too well. Had not "the happy memory of her husband" —to use her own periphrase— died on shipboard, coming home with his little store of gold? The poor dear! And the worst was that she must lay the whole blame upon herself. For what would you have? She had chanced to stir the jealousy of a neighbour by her artless pride when the letter came to say that he was returning, not empty-handed. Magaria! The Evil Eye! Amulets on body, horns over doorway, oil and salt in rooms,—all had proved of no avail. Her husband had

died at sea. What else was to be expected? Eccelenza must pardon her if she wept.

And she wept again, when Burgoyne made ready to start upon his expedition. But when she saw that he was not to be moved from his purpose, her mood shifted. Unlike the Calypso of Fénelon, she was consolable. She had hit upon a brave device, if he would but adopt it at her prayer. Let him go inconspicuous, in peasant garb. He laughed, and allowed Maria to procure what she thought fit. If he could but take a turn down the High at Oxford, with his conical cap and its velvet-bands laced crosswise; short jacket, cut military-fashion and effulgent with buttons; waist-band of leather; breeches turned up at knee; and leggings wound about by ropes of blue wool! Surely now he must be safe, even to Maria's apprehensive fancy. With his quickly amassed store of right phrases, he might pass anywhere in Calabria as a native—from some other district. Sunburnt and strong, should he meet with brigands he was like to be offered a post among them without ado.

Away he strode from Cosenza, a very peasant. La Sila called him,—La Sila that for long centuries had been the forest of freedom, the nest of eagles, and lair of wolves, baffling the might of gold and fire and sword, the indeterminable land of all and none.

About him rose the hum of insects and the pungent scent of rosemary. Pearly dragon-flies darted along the river-beds, fringed with oleanders. Lizards whisked away from the stones at the edge of the blinding road. He was hailed, from time to time, by country-folk bound for Cosenza, and singing merrily.

On and on he made his way, crossing the rush of mountain-streams rich with trout; and upward from the mild region of figs and olives to that of the oaks and giant chestnuts which towered above the scintillating darkness of laurels and myrtles. Here and there a vista opened towards endless plains of yellow stubble, or of waving flax that mimicked the hue of heaven overhead.

At last he had reached the earliest pines of the veritable Sila. Night was at hand, and the mountain-breeze had grown chill. He began to quest about for shelter till the dawn. At a turn of the road he came upon three men who had lighted a fire for comfort. He was welcome to share their meal and put up for the night with them. Yes, it was silk-cocoons they were carrying to market. Passing round his provision of tobacco, he had won their confidence. If that is not too much to say—for Calabrians, like the peasants of Normandy, most skilfully avoid committing themselves when question is put to them. For instance, Burgoyne more than once had noticed, from his village, that the far horizon was reddened, after nightfall, as by fires. Were they due to brigands, or gipsies; to charcoal burners, or men like themselves? And was there no

danger in them? But the most he could gather from his hosts was that, while the soil is to a great extent private property, the forests upon it belong to government. Suppose a spark mischances, and the forest is afire! Well,—imagine the spokesman plugging his pipe with deliberation, and waiting until the draught is fully restored,—well, there is a change to be made in the governmental map; and the land is now become private and productive. And besides, put in another, with a smile of finest irony, there is a lurking-place the less for the brigands. Whereupon the comrades huddled closer round the blaze, and capped reminiscences of these spirited folk till far into the night.

Dreamily, towards dawn, Burgoyne exchanged God-speed with his friends, as they prepared for departure; and then he dozed again. But not for long. Desire pricked within him, and forbade idle sleep. And so, at length, he touched the heights, and could cry "Thalassa!" in a rapture, as he beheld the two gulfs far-stretching on either hand in shimmery mistiness. And sated by the grandiose spectacle noon found him tabled before delicate fare of the country. He had lighted upon a "difesa," empty and seldom visited. The thought came to him of the Norman barons who once had parcelled out their fiefs in La Sila. Here, in this farmer and caretaker, was the feudal retainer offering hospitality in the name of his absent lord. But it was Hebe and the banquet that engrossed his attention: Hebe, grave and barbaric, in her wealth of spangles and coral and threaded ribbons; and provender fit for whatever appetite.

And then, before well he knew, it was the hour of sunset again. Cosenza was still far away. He must try St Julian's inn, and rest upon dry litter before a fire of brushwood. This time he was alone. His revolver lay within reach. Propped against a tree, his hands crossed behind his head, he was given over to happy reverie, or went near to think of nothing at all. Drowsily he heaped on fresh twigs. There was no help for it: he would have to tell Maria that my Lady Adventure had passed him by without regard. He had caught no glimpse of faun or satyr in Macchiasacra, though once it was peopled of them. Unless indeed he chose to count as such the shepherds with their breeches of goat-skins. Even "Monacheddu," tricksome and capricious elf, would not take compassion on him and visit his bivouac. While, as for brigands——

The sudden snap of a twig hard by brought him to his feet. Two figures were springing towards the light. Their intentions were clear enough. He fired twice; was struck from behind, and fell senseless. . . .

The moon was up. Aching, and still dazed, he found a rag bound about his head. Watch, small monies, and revolver were gone. But the

rascals had looked to his wound, and given such care as might be. Surely, considerate rascals! But what was become of them?

He tried to rise, but sank in weakness against a fallen trunk. The moonlight now flooded the space between him and the road. Flickering and fantastic shadows were cast by the undergrowth, as it stirred in the night breeze. He seemed to hear a voice, crooning, not far away. Or was it but the ringing of his battered head? Nearer and nearer it came, till it was as if words were being whispered in his ear, over and over again, like the burden of some ritual. Nunziata, the daughter of Giorgio Castriota! He must seek out little Nunziata. He must wed her when the time was come. Thus only could he make atonement, and escape the wrath of the man he had slain. And then the sounds, receding, passed once more into a droning song of strange intervals, and died away.

Burgoyne must have slept heavily, for all his pain. Some waggoners, bound for Cosenza, found and waked him. Poor little one! They did not need to ask what had befallen, and laid him tenderly enough amid the straw, with many a kindly lament.

It was market-day at Cosenza, and the good folk gathered about him. He was speedily recognised by a herdsman from his village, and transferred to still another waggon that would take him home to Maria. Fame trumpeted the return of the stricken hero. All and sundry hurried forth to meet and escort him; and it was with no small difficulty that Maria drove them at length from her door.

When the days of feverishness were over, Burgoyne told his tale to the distressed Maria. She had her prompt solution of all mysteries. It was "Monacheddu" himself who had whispered in his ear. By right Calabrian custom, one must wed the daughter of the man one has slain by accident. "Monacheddu" did but urge the plainest duty. Motherless Nunziata of this very village, as "Monacheddu" had said! They all knew Nunziata, the girl with the eyes black as pepper-grains. Did she not live up the hill there, at Zi' Caterina's? This aunt of hers, and her father, Giorgio Castriota, were Albanians of the clan that dwelt in a neighbouring valley. Poor Giorgio, with his scrap of a farm, which he would not sell to the rich man who owned the land thereabout! And this man's horses got in and ruined Giorgio's maize, not by chance. Of what use were prayers for compensation, or angry threats? Giorgio grew desperate; and a horse of the "Galantuomo's" is found with a shot in its head. There is a lawsuit. What can the worm do when the heel is upon it? Nothing is left for Giorgio but the road to the mountain. The rich eat white bread, and the rest go a-hungry. And now the poor fellow was dead, by the will of God; and Eccelenza must marry his daughter. There was no doubt of that.

Burgoyne found it all clear and logical enough, from Maria's point of view and that of the villagers. But it was upon the adventure itself, rather than its doomed sequel, that he for his part chose to dwell. Two, three, or still more in number, his brigands had doubtless thought it an easy matter to lay hands upon a single peasant, and relieve him of whatever trifling sum he might possess at the moment. He could well dismiss all connection between these and the hearty fellows with whom he had spent the previous night. But, even so, there was no end to his tangle of surmises and doubts. Which, for instance, was the father, out of the two men he had shot? And were they dead, or wounded only? Who had struck him down and then played "Monacheddu," thinking to deal with a simple and credulous countryman of his own? Was the man who had tended him when he lay helpless the same as he who played "Monacheddu" to secure the interests of his comrade? or again, it might be that no one was dead at all, and Monacheddu-Giorgio had cunningly arranged for the welfare of his daughter at no further cost to himself.

Burgoyne laughed at the thought; and his laughter may have helped him to a more speedy recovery.

And presently he sent for Nunziata and Zi' Caterina. A lean grasshopper of a girl stood before him, twisting a finger in her apron, and lowering at him beneath her tangled mass of crisply waved hair. He held conference with the two women and Don Antonio, the priest. He would be at charges for this girl of ten. She should be educated at a convent in Naples, and have a dowry made up for her in all good time. Don Antonio rubbed his hands in much satisfaction, and proffered his snuff-box; but Maria shook her head sadly. Eccelenza was a very saint for goodness; but he came, she feared, of the folk who dwell in some fashion or other beyond the sea, and care neither for devil nor the wrathful souls of the slain. Burgoyne heard her say it to Zi' Caterina when the kindly priest was gone. And he laughed again.

In the course of the following years the academic reputation of Burgoyne rose to a great height. Young Oxford is prompt to appreciate, and capable of enthusiasm upon fit occasion. The specialist is voted a "good man," though he makes no bid for wide applause. But when a figure presents itself like that of Burgoyne's, virile and robustly decisive, he soon has his train of admiring disciples, ready to cite typical anecdotes, or at need to invent them.

His devotees would explain to you that Burgoyne was of those masterful men who wear, so to speak, the lion's skin; who are nurtured on rock-honeycomb and the produce of the chase. You must either love him or abominate—he left you no middle choice. He was known to be equally admired

and feared by his colleagues. It might be urged, indeed, that he played the sturdy monopolist in conversation. A massive Spanish galleon, as it were, he was not to be distracted or foiled, Armada-fashion, by swift-sailing craft that deal their strokes and cleverly retire. There was no safe distance for the light wit or slender eclectic. The Titan forthwith grappled, fulminated, and swept over the wreck. And what if, impetuous to the degree, he seemed not seldom to outrun discretion? It was his way, and hardly could you bring yourself to find fault with him. Why, he had entered upon a new career before you were fairly ready to criticise the old. The defects of his qualities! One does not wish the necessary shadows of a fine portrait removed.

So they ran on, these disciples of his, among whom Edward Sumner counted himself, in his last year at Oxford. Indeed he had come to believe that he was specially favoured, and promoted to close intimacy with his hero. No one else, he supposed, knew that Burgoyne had lately come by a large fortune, and was casting about to decide whether he should break the tie that bound him to his beloved university, and begin that career of travel and writing which, subsequently, established his wider fame. And it was Sumner's lot, before he proceeded graduate, to share in certain incidents that had a decisive bearing upon Burgoyne's future.

Thus, one late afternoon, a good hour before dinner in the Hall, Sumner was seated in Burgoyne's rooms. The elder man was engaged upon a paper of his pupil's which treated of certain knotty questions in the 'De Anima' of Aristotle. While he flipped over the pages, scolding and discoursing in his own animated fashion, there came a tap at the door. "What is it?" Burgoyne snapped, as the porter entered. A lady wished to see him. "Why now? And why at all?" Nesbitt looked injured and scratched his side-whiskers. Could Nesbitt, the dignified, fully conscious as he was of his high position and responsibilities, for a moment be supposed ignorant of due observances? Surely he was to be trusted to know that it was not yet Commemoration Week, when the intrusion of the fair sex can be condoned, or is even in the order of things. Clearly it was sufficient to state that this lady, whom he took to be a foreigner, would neither give her name nor take a refusal. "Bring her, then!"

Sumner made ready to take his leave, but was checked by a swift gesture. "You must stay to protect me," laughed Burgoyne. And presently the door was flung open by Nesbitt, a figure of cold scorn. Had he been ruffled by the lady? or did he think her much too handsome for any proper purposes? That must be left undetermined: Burgoyne and Sumner were wholly occupied with this superb piece of youth-

ful womanhood, who had brought them to their feet in a trice.

Sumner, in a rapt silence, stole his shy glances. Her noble beauty, manifest in despite of travelling weeds! To dwell and brood upon all that such beauty promised was as if you listened to music. Yet even so, he could not but share his admiration between the lady and his hero. For majesty was met by majesty. Burgoyne was as grave and courteous as any Sheik of the tent, who presses refreshment before all inquiry.

Burgoyne's few words of welcome were, indeed, in happy keeping, Sumner thought. More would break the spell. He began to dread the need of spoiling these fleeting moments of quiet felicity. It was enough to sit retired and watch this opening rosebud of all roses; this Pallas Athene; this Bradamante, Zuleika,—this supreme model for an artist, if he could only decide upon her name and pose. She was grave, or even sombre, and yet you followed with delight her handling of cup and saucer, knowing in advance that her every motion would be purest poetry. Her voice could thrill; and none the less you would have besought her to remain as she was, lovely and speechless. Her gaze was tranquil; and yet one was sure that, a woman, she saw without seeming to see. You felt that she vividly responded to the charm of her present surroundings. For Burgoyne's rooms, as Sumner would have been proud to tell you, had their own reputation. His treasures, though not costly, had been gathered with deliberate care, to fit with his purposed scheme of quiet harmonies. The carved panelling came from Normandy, through which he had travelled with a caravan and its fellow packed with new furniture, to exchange for old. Swift to discern promise, he had hung his walls with the happy first-fruits of talent, a right patron of art though his purse was slender.

At length, however, the lady opened of herself upon the business that had brought her. It was a world to hear her coin the simple phrases of her English. She was come from Italy, and wished to enter the college where women learned the same things as men.

"Exactly!" said Burgoyne. It was the practice of the Italian Renaissance, lately revived in our two ancient universities. But we moderns should not be content merely to ape the past. There was that American idea, for instance, of the two sexes being educated together. Thus the problem was enlarged. What if women not only learnt the same things as men, but learnt them under the same roof?

He gravely turned to Sumner, as if to bring him within the conversation. "You have heard, Sumner, that I wished to reserve this inner quadrangle, with its access to the gardens, for women students and myself, as their philosopher

and friend? Unfortunately, the plan was not received as it should have been."

Sumner had heard nothing of such a plan, and could have laughed. But one was always too late with Burgoyne, who had passed already to his abrupt questions. That was the way in which he managed business. And he had presently settled for his visitor that she must stay at the Clarendon. He would call for her the next morning, and they would proceed together to the famous college for women. And then, without waiting for any acceptance of his proposal, he had drawn her away to inspect this and that which he had brought from Italy. Moved by the charm of her deft comments, he began to be lavish from his stores of memories and impressions, but checked himself on a sudden. Ah, he must talk to her of Italy on the morrow. Meanwhile, his watch being consulted, there was just time for him to see her safely to the hotel.

She rose and thrilled Sumner by the touch of her hand. Burgoyne, seeking for his hat, put another of his questions, and found that he owed this delightful visit to his lately published book of Italian travel. Reading it, she had noticed on the title-page his standing and college. Who, she thought, was so likely as he to give her the information and help she required. He bowed, and they passed out.

Sumner could almost have grudged the lady her privilege of the morrow. When Burgoyne grew copious on a darling theme the feeling of his young friend was like that of Bacon's audience, — the fear lest he should make an end. And, besides, to have had this charming creature for a joint listener!

In Hall he noticed that Burgoyne came in late, and was equally amused and gratified when, presently, a twisted note was brought him from the high table. Sumner must come to his rooms at nine. And in due time he heard Burgoyne leaping up the stairs.

"My good fellow," cried Burgoyne, catching Sumner and holding him out at arm's-length, "let me congratulate you. You are the first man to see my wife."

Sumner's look of surprise passed into laughter. He was not aware that Burgoyne was married.

"But I shall be, and that speedily."

Had she fixed the day? Sumner parried.

Burgoyne shook him. "You dog! You had better set your brains to work and fix upon my wedding-present while there is time. . . . But a truce to this. Here's that paper of yours we did not finish."

Next day there was no Burgoyne so far as Sumner was concerned. What had happened? Was this new confidence withdrawn from him? He ventured, after Hall, to make inquiry from the porter as to his hero's movements. Mr Burgoyne went out early in the morning and had not yet returned. It was not until he

was safe from Nesbitt's observation that he gave way to merriment. Why, it was Burgoyne all over! But, nevertheless, a jest was a jest, and, later in the night, Sumner sallied out from his rooms to see if a certain window was lighted that was so; and there was nothing left but to wait for what the morrow should bring.

The morrow came, and Sumner found himself accosted by Burgoyne as they were leaving chapel. "You did not receive that note of mine I forgot to write? We were to breakfast together it should have informed you." And presently Burgoyne was pouring out the coffee and seeing in all respects to the welfare of his guest.

The servant gone, he turned abruptly to Sumner.

"By the way, she has rejected me."

He said no more, and heartily proceeded to attack his bacon and kidneys. If it was unseemly to laugh, it was equally foolish, Sumner thought, to criticise Burgoyne's precipitancy in love-addresses. He made content with the bare question as to what had passed. But Burgoyne paid no attention. He talked with enthusiasm of a man he had recently met in Common Room—a scholar fresh from his Eastern travels. Breakfast at an end, he offered cigarettes and strode about the room.

Then he dropped into a chair. "The wise give and need small explanation," he said with a smile. "Love, like Life itself, is very warfare. A woman's heart is as a fort to be carried by storm. It is waste labour to throw up outworks and parallels. . . . As for the education of my young friend, la Signorina de Sanctis, I myself would see to that, I assured her. There was no need of any college. We two would be Héloise and Abelard, —without the tragic sequel. If there was aught I did not know, why should we not learn it together? For example, a cultured Japanese knew some ten thousand words of his own language. There are fifty thousand more, at the least; and we might make a beginning by acquiring these, if she so wished. Or there was that great desideratum of literature, the history of Human Folly. Love was sweetest folly; and I begged that we might commence our studies at once."

He paused for a moment. "Young man, I tell you that right conversation is warfare! Pressed hotly, she might essay clever retreats, with beard on shoulder, as the Spaniards say. Not that she is bearded. But I forced her to draw up at length, and face me. She dealt me a shrewd stroke. Since I would have it, she must announce herself as already engaged. For the moment my guard was broken down; but I quickly recovered, and made my answering thrust. I too was already engaged. Therefore let us marry, I urged conclusively."

He rose, and stood with his back to the fireplace. "And what did she say? Nothing.

She froze me with a look, and swept out of the room."

Then he burst into the laughter of joy. "My dear lad, it was delightful. She was just as I would have her be. The mettled virgin, the lofty Queen of the Amazons, should promptly resist all encroachment. To have her mastery challenged! Not to be her own any longer! At the thought she takes fire. She is scorn, indignation, and amazement in turns. I tell you, she now feels as I would have her feel, ridden by the thought of me. My image is constantly before her. She trembles at the approach of the love-god. Resentment, dread, shall melt into devotion. She is mine wholly, that she may be the more and completely herself." He flung out his arms in a proud rapture. "She is woman, through and through. The pair of us, the pair of us! We two against the world! Nay, but we will have our world, our kingdom of subjects wearing their glad bonds!"

Then he ceased from laughter, and smiled as if in mockery of himself. Changing his tone, he shook a warning finger at Sumner. "Look here, youngster! This is quite serious, and as delightful as it is true. . . . And I was no fool to go back to the Clarendon, after my circuit of the parks and due meditation. I knew she was gone straightway for London and Italy. And so an end,—and the beginning of all."

He was now wholly calm. "The name she gave us, what of that? I have my idea. She spoke the truth, and I too, when we said that we were engaged already. I give her breathing-space, Sumner. Then I follow hot-foot, and with you. Put away all thought of it till this month and your schools are over! Not a word between now and then! Italy awaits us. We have our coming days of brisk adventure."

It was on board, as they crossed to Dieppe, that Burgoyne narrated his visit to Calabria. He had his willing and absorbed audience, so long as the tale lasted. But Sumner's hero-worship was not of the subservient and assenting order. That was no way to win Burgoyne's regard. He knew it, and felt that he best enjoyed his man when he made bold to contradict him flatly. Then, if ever, was the time to see him exhibit his quality. Besides, had not Burgoyne taunted him ere now as a weaver of airy cobwebs, the hair-splitting dissector of motives, the green-sick victim of introspection? Was he not accused of being a haggard Cassius, who thought too much? Not so would Sumner force his way through the Schools and Life, it had been told him. For the rest of the journey, Sumner availed himself, with pleasant malice, of the reproach brought against him. He plied Burgoyne with all manner of analysis and reconstruction.

"Let us suppose," he would say, "that la Signorina de Sanctis and your Nunziata are

one. Accordingly, it was a pretty piece of ambiguity on her part when she declared herself already engaged. But if I maintain that she took your echo of her words in all seriousness, and fled, believing you were pledged to some English girl?"

"Not for a moment!" he thundered. "She is the child of nature. She came to seek me out, thinking I delayed too long. She would fling her gage to a thousand English girl-slips, and stake her life on the victory."

The child of nature? Sumner begged to dispute. What they had seen was the delicate culture of mind and manners, the flower of refinement. Though, indeed, she could not altogether escape the consciousness of the past. Tradition and the new forces within her strove for supremacy. She knew not what to make of her standing and future. Wishing to judge upon the sure ground of observation, she came and took the measure of Burgoyne's surroundings—and of Burgoyne himself. An hour sufficed. Alone, withdrawn, she could summon no vision of the bandit's child mated with such as he. Swayed to and fro by emotion, in an agony of pride and humility, fearing to trammel his future, she shuddered and fled.

"In the name of the Prophet—figs!" Burgoyne scoffed. "The pretty picture you draw of a watery heroine who makes the wrong sacrifice, wasting herself and the man she loves! . . . You forget that I saw her on the morrow. And our conversation was a merry play of flint and steel. All went well. She refused me and fled, just as I wished."

Sumner loftily dismissed the interruption. The child of art, he went on, could well conceal her pain behind a mask of wit and lightsomeness, and none the less be determined all the while to flee. Or, if Burgoyne liked it better, she did not blench, inasmuch as she was the child of nature, springing from a race of stoical savages, of brigands.

Burgoyne's wrath was smouldering. "Brigands! What say you to Robin Hood, our national hero? What say you to the Brigantes of Britain, Spain, Gaul, the lake of Constance, elsewhere? For wherever your Romans came into collision with a tribe that was tameless and proof against bonds, they stamped them Brigantes. The brat of a brigand! I tell you she is descended from those Albanians who dared to mock the invading hordes of the Ottoman Turks, and, refusing to bow the neck, chose exile and crossed to Italy. She is Albanian. There is good history for it all, and the plain witness of the priest in Nunziata's case. She is proud to spring from the dauntless comrades of Skanderbeg, who in the fulness of time will wake from the tomb and lead his race back to their homes again. My faith upon it, she is the child of Giorgio Castriota, whom we know as Skanderbeg, the very incarnation of freedom!"

But Sumner was not to be browbeaten. Heated, he would carry Burgoyne in the flank. "You talk of freedom! Have you considered that, by your own account, you possibly freed her father from his prison-house of flesh? Suppose I allow she is primitive. What, then, if nature prompted her to make for England, seeking means to avenge her father?"

But he only fired Burgoyne to new enthusiasm. "Magnificent! By the shade of Corneille, you make us the new Rodrigue and Chimène. She comes to lull one with soft enchantments; whips out a hidden dagger, and makes to plunge it in my heart. But she must let it fall idly, because she loves. The rare tragi-comedy! And well could I have played partner to her. I only make complaint that she quitted the stage before the play was fairly begun. . . . But I tell you she fled only to be pursued, like Virgil's Galatea. Such coquetry is ordained in the perennial code of Love."

Sumner was grown thoughtful. "Seriously, Burgoyne, what if there is blood between you and her? How would she take it, primitive or not primitive?"

"Away with that! How is there any knowing what happened? Could I suppose that any one of the crew was her father? Was I prescient that she was to be she?" He laughed. "Bah! In Italy, the name of 'accident' covers up what you will in crime or good self-defence. Let it pass!"

He carried it off bravely enough, but it was clear that he was troubled for the moment. When they reached their destination he would make all possible inquiries. Not that he expected any result. Even should he learn that the man was dead, it would not be the first time that a member of his profession spread the report of his own demise, so that he might turn up elsewhere with a clean record. In any case, obstacles presented themselves in order to be broken down. The smooth course was never to his liking.

In due time, Burgoyne and his comrade alighted at Naples. The guardian was sure that his ward had returned to her convent. But it pleased him to flutter the maiden-heart, as he put it. He would keep her on the stretch of expectation by calling upon her without asking to see her.

In the parlour, however, news was brought that Nunziata had obtained consent some time ago to visit her aunt Caterina. She had failed as yet to announce her return, and the Lady Superior was intending, this very day, to write to Don Antonio, the parish priest. Not that such a proceeding implied any censure upon Nunziata's conduct, which was beyond praise. But the dear creature, in those savage wilds, might perchance have fallen ill. Burgoyne, thinking of her late escapade, smiled as he listened with polite deference. And he was still silent when they had passed

out into the busy streets. "The stricken doe has fled to its native fastnesses," Sumner lightly suggested. But Burgoyne made no answer. Nunziata's presence in the mountain village had complicated matters.

They reached their destination by forced marches. But, even here, Nunziata was elusive. Maria, voluble and smiling as ever, amid her pictured saints, amulets, silkworms, and the pigs of the family, gave them to understand that the girl was away for a wedding at a village of Albanians, up there in the mountain. The good folk here about could make nothing of her, so completely had she overpassed the range of their knowledge. But they stood in awe of her the more, and counted it indispensable that she should honour with her presence the marriage of a relative, however far removed.

Were those inquiries of Burgoyne's to be made first, or to follow upon the vision of Nunziata as a bridesmaid, asked Sumner, maliciously. Burgoyne frowned, and shot out his lip. One must not lose the chance of seeing a "marriage by capture," in the high traditional sort. It was no small matter thus to be at close quarters with Pelasgi, Proto-Hellenes at the least, exiles still mourning for their "beautiful Morea," as you knew from their songs. He was full of the topic, and eager to cover up the change in his plans, to the amusement of Sumner.

With daybreak they were up and away, climbing the heights. In good time they were mingling with the village-folk who made holiday, and stood before the house of the bridegroom, who was weeping in Homeric style as he bowed to receive the blessing of his parents, in despite of his attendant chorus and their songs of consolation. Then they followed the silent and stealthy approach of the ravishers. The home of the bride reached, the paranymphs softly chaunted: "O swallow of the milk-white throat, open without delay and reveal thyself to me, for thy heavenly one is come to the door!" From within came the answering strain of the women: "Hush, comrades, till she be ready! Clothes are at the wash, and bread is in the oven; she will come when we have brought them forth." At least, that was it in Burgoyne's running translation. And up rose again the voices of the men without, urging the bridegroom to seize upon his prey. "But thou, lord and spouse, cease thy timid bearing! Not now does it behove to make ready for the battle, but to abduct the maiden of the apple-cheeks and delicate limbs." And the answer came: "Now is the hour to depart, sister mine! Be thou bounteous unto all, even as the sun when it issues forth, as the wine in the cup, and the loaf on the table! Like the dove of heaven, be thou happy beneath the rain in the love of thy mate!"

Whereupon one of the men

outside fired his signal shot, and all made show to force the door that was already unbarred. With gestures of wrath and violence the bridegroom and his paranymphs strode in to seize the beloved, who sobbed and moaned as duty was. Away she was led to church. "There, high up in the mountain," sang the men, "there where the partridges broadly feed, down swooped an eagle, culled the fairest, and mounted sky-wards." And the women in return: "O sovereign eagle of all eagles, leave me the partridge, the one thou holdest in the grip, bedewing her bosom with many a tear!" But the men in triumph: "He will not free her, nor let her go. For why? His heart is set upon her for himself."

"The very truth," laughed Burgoyne in comment, "if the name of that partridge of all partridges is Nunziata." And to be styled partridge was no insult, as Sumner would agree, if once he set eyes upon the beauty of its white and red and purple plumage.

But, in all this company, where was she? They had not seen her in the procession, for all their careful scrutiny. Pressing into the church, Burgoyne, massive and blonde, towering high even among these mountaineers, shot his glances without effect. Not the bride only, but her friends, wore the veil that is customary at church-functions. Sumner took occasion to address a handsome fellow at his side: proud of posture, manifestly conscious of shirt-sleeves comparatively white, and his vest of blue tricked out with buttons of silver. "La Signorina Castriota?" he whispered, and nodded vaguely round the church. But he got scant courtesy in return. This "buck" of the village eyed Sumner and Burgoyne up and down, darkling like a thundercloud. Then he flung round of a sudden with a toss of the red tassel upon his cap, faced them, and shot out two fingers pointed to the ground. "Magaria!" he muttered. "Magaria!"

Sumner turned for explanation to Burgoyne, who only shrugged his shoulders in contempt. As for Nunziata, perhaps she would consent to be visible when they wove the chain of the dance through the village street. Primitive, or cultured, would she join or refrain from the dance, Sumner asked. But his friend was not responsive to his teasing.

And in vain did they follow the wedded pair, who, crowned with garlands, walked hand in hand. Amid song and invocation, pelted with propitious grain, the pageant halted before the bridegroom's house. A new tumult arose, to the tune of the musket. Some would enforce, and others resist, the entrance of the bride. Way was made at length for the mother to bless and bind her children with a silken fillet, while the women danced the "vala" and chanted moral precepts in her name.

But still there was no Nunziata. "She plays tricks, the vixen," laughed Burgoyne.

"She must have been at the service, but has slipped away without a sign." He was impatient to be gone, and would barely wait for the revellers to end the marriage meal and rouse the whole village to festival. He now lacked all eye for the flashing costumes of gold and silk upon which he had descanted so fully to beguile the way thither in the morning. He snapped derisively at the songs of love and sighs and loyalty. Black of brow, he dragged Sumner away, and seldom opened his mouth as they made homewards.

Once indeed he lifted up his voice in mockery, quoting a scrap of song he had caught up. "Thou art my whole heart and desire! Sweet moustache over port-hole, all thy threads are to me as a costly web of foreign gold!" By now, Nunziata should rightly have been celebrating him in such dulcet sort. But he waved his hand: "Port-hole . . . Potato-trap!" and dismissed the subject.

And once, after another long interval of silence, he paused to point out a woman who laboured in the field. Her hair was closely cropped, and her husband's jacket hung in rags about her skirt. An Albanian widow, it behoved her to carry it, summer and winter through, till it dropped wholly away. "The poor devils! Prisoner of the house, if rich, in Greek and Oriental fashion; and beasts of burden, if poor, from mother to daughter without an end. Well might they sing of happiness 'beneath the rain' of ill-fortune—and of blows, belike, from husbandly fists!"

The next morning it was evident that Burgoyne was for postponing all investigation of the past. That was a secondary or trifling consideration. His one purpose was to meet Nunziata and come at certainties. Bound for Zi' Caterina's cottage, he flung over his shoulder a curt announcement to Sumner that he would presently be back with news.

A little while after an urchin presented himself in a fragmentary and sad-coloured shirt for all costume. He bore a missive for the English gentleman. Sumner would have liked to ask if, boy-like, he had dallied by the way. But that might go for granted. At all events, it could only come from Nunziata, and Burgoyne doubtless knew its contents by now. Putting it in his pocket, he cultivated patience as best he might.

Rambling about the village, seated so delightfully upon its twin torrents, he ran across Burgoyne, blackavised like a brooding storm. Yes, he had seen Nunziata, and also a certain Gaetano, the fellow who had insulted them yesterday in church. It was as if the peasant garb she wore conferred upon her the right to show no recognition. Of need, he had proclaimed himself to Zi' Caterina, who touched his coat and kissed his hand, showering blessings upon him. But Nunziata, muttering what might pass equally well for courtesy or objection, steadily

avoided his gaze; while her lover — since lover he plainly was—rubbed his chin, as much as to say that Burgoyne's claim in the matter was subject to many doubts and demurrers. There was nothing for it but to take oneself off with such dignity as could be mustered. And as for Nunziata——

Sumner produced the note he had taken over. Opened, it was handed back to him in a trice. Nunziata begged him, in a dozen words, to quit the village and Calabria forthwith. Squaring his jaw, Burgoyne eyed his friend as though he had a culprit before him from whom he would wreak explanations, for all his shiftiness. But in a moment he was setting forth the case in cool and judicial fashion. This Nunziata loved her Gaetano. Otherwise, a piece of richest womanhood, an Amazon born, she would roundly have dismissed him rather than the man to whom she owed some little gratitude.

But Sumner would hear nothing of logic where woman was concerned. It often happened that you best interpret her actions by deciding that they run contrary to the secret desire of her heart. He was for dilating upon the theme when Maria came in to spread the board. Burgoyne plied her with brisk questions. Their Calabrian was lost upon Sumner, and the varied play of Maria's face was but as riddle upon riddle. At last she was gone, and Burgoyne turned to his friend once more with easy smiles.

He marked off his points, finger by finger. "First: You must know, youngster, that Maria is racked through and through with joy. She has always known that the English Excellency would keep his promise and endow Nunziata with a wedding-portion. That was good. But to think that Excellency himself would marry her and appease the angry shade of Giorgio!

"And next: behold Maria prodigal of doubts and apprehensions! Gaetano of Calabria is, it would seem, a tough nut to crack. No sooner was the little Nunziata back for the first time from her convent, holiday-making, than he solemnly initiated his little playmate into the august comradeship of San Giovanni. Thus, he made her pluck out a hair; they tugged at either end, and gave the fragments to the wind. Thus, he picked up a stone; they spat upon it, and flung it out of sight, swearing whole loyalty each to each till the stone be found again. Knit in these firmest bonds, time goes on for them. Gaetano grows up, ungovernable except at the slightest beck of his pledged comrade. There is notable stuff of the brigand to be discerned in him. Picture the recruits of his year being led to barracks by the sergeant! They weep, and go heavily; but your Gaetano mocks, and deserts the self-same night. Maria is at a loss to know why he has not already claimed his own in good Calabrian fashion. He has but to tear from his mistress her veil of black and force a white one upon her; or slit with his knife whatever of vesture lies

between neck and sleeveless arms."

He paused, and brought his fist slap on the table. "And after that," says Maria in a whisper, "his treatment of her is like to be 'plain Turkish.' . . . The devil take him!"

Then he passed to his merriment again. "Thirdly: Maria has her own clue to my misadventure. I am become the subject of antipathy, through no fault of my own. The news of the mad Englishman's return was speedily spread abroad. Gaetano, on the lurk, inspected me, and found that I possessed the evil eye. Doubtless he arms himself and Nunziata with potent amulets; and presently the whole village will dread my baleful influence. And so, according to Maria, that treasure of a girl could not but conceive her sudden dislike, and shrink from me."

Sumner laughed. "You will never get me to believe that la Signorina Castriota has lapsed into the primitive. . . . But, is there any danger on the side of the village?"

"Yes," laughed Burgoyne in return. "We shall have the lads and lasses taking to their heels when they catch sight of us; while the good folk of older growth will twiddle fingers and mumble 'Magaria!' as you know from yesterday's experience. But there is no need for alarm. We have Maria as our stout ally. She is convinced that, so far from exercising the evil eye, I am fallen a victim myself to noxious spells, as is proved by my ill-luck in love-making. But, she says, there is help to be had. A woman has but to fix her gaze within the heart-shaped aperture of her lace-trimmed shift, and breathe upon her bosom—'pouuuh!' is the way of it—to heal whom she will from the effects of fascination. I have only to get Nunziata to do it for me. . . . But there's the rub, the getting her! However, Maria hints mysteriously that she knows a still more efficacious method. Whatever that may be, we can simply leave the matter in her capable hands."

He was right. Before they had well ended their meal Maria was back again with a large assortment of women neighbours, who clustered shyly about the door. The good soul, of her own prompting, had brought the accredited witch-wife of the village to rid away Burgoyne's malady. Was he blighted by the evil eye or by some one's envy? Had "Monacheddu" himself, with the silken hand for his friends and the leaden for his enemies, conceived a grudge against him? Zi' Serafina would know, and repair all harm. At all events, the two Englishmen found her picturesque with her bodice of worn beaver, her necklace of coral, and the uncombed wisps that escaped from beneath her hair-net and kerchief. If Eccelenza would but consent to be cured!

Burgoyne laughed, and in a trice Zi' Serafina was at work. Shading her eyes with a hand wrinkled like a last year's apple, she bent her shaggy brows and gazed fixedly at him. "Say: fora fascino e benedica!" He

obeyed. Making horns with downward-pointing fingers, she muttered "Eight-Nine!" in place of the "Six-Seven!" used of black witches alone, till the hook of her nose trembled with zeal. Then she yawned, exposing a toothless cavern. Burgoyne, as if in full agreement that the treatment was tedious, yawned still more freely. At which she turned towards her awe-stricken company, in solemn complacency and with an assuring wave of her hand, as to signify that Burgoyne was plainly the victim of fascination, and one that stood in need of her ripest art. She yawned and yawned till the tears ran down from her deep-sunken eyes, and not a few of her train bore her sympathetic company. Then, mumbling newer conjurations, she seized upon Burgoyne's hand, brooded over him as though he were a sick child, and, suddenly stooping, shot out her tongue and marked the cross three times upon his forehead.

Burgoyne sprang back with somewhat of a shudder, which only confirmed the wise-woman in her conscious pride of mastery. Ah, but he was fearfully fascinated! But what of that, since she was there? The bystanders shuffled in timid applause. Did Eccelenza feel it pricking and passing away through his arms and legs? It was envy, jealous envy, that had done it all; but now he was free. Let him no longer stand in dread! She swallowed salt and water, and bade him wash in what remained of the liquor she had blended and blessed.

Burgoyne, checking his laughter as best he could, assured her of his complete recovery. But the reward he offered so wrought upon her that she was for teaching him, gratuitously, her choicest spells against toothache, sunstroke, the "Monacheddu," and whatever else was to be feared. But at last a sign to the admiring Maria brought relief, and Zi' Serafina withdrew.

The two friends had their laugh out, and then Burgoyne caught up his hat and stick. It was the hour for the serenade. He must look after that fellow, who was sure to be hanging about. And Sumner must stay where he was. No help was needed.

There was no disputing with Burgoyne when once he had said his say. But presently Sumner was out in the road. At another time he might have been taken with the croaking of the bull-frogs and the mazy pattern of the fire-flies. Such music and illuminations were new to him. But he was uneasy.

He knew in which direction lay the house where Nunziata lived, and yet turned the opposite way. But his obedience to orders gave him no satisfaction. Growing still more restless, he crossed the bridge again, and was about to pass the red cliff with its gush of fresh water round which the girls clustered all day long, filling their jars of burnt clay. The moon had risen above the trees, and he saw that which quickly made him draw back

within the shade. Burgoyne stood by the well-head, and not alone. The gestures of the pair were plain enough to read. Nunziata would evidently have him go, because she feared for his safety. Sumner made sure she threatened to go herself on the morrow if he refused. She must have made this belated errand in the hope to meet with him, and warn.

But how had she escaped the vigilance of Gaetano? Sumner could have wished to go forward and join them. But why add his appeal to that of Nunziata? He well knew that to speak of danger to Burgoyne was but to urge him headlong into the midst of it.

Before he could overcome his hesitation, they had turned away and were betaking themselves towards her home. Sumner followed, hugging the shade. It was no hard task to avoid their observation. The way led upwards between garden-walls topped by thick foliage; and the pair, as one could see when they crossed the patches of moonlight, were wholly absorbed in their own concernments. Burgoyne was not losing a moment of his opportunity; his voice rose masterful and joyous as ever.

On a sudden there was a cry and a fall. Running forwards, Sumner found Nunziata with a knife in her hand. Gaetano, springing from cover, had stabbed Burgoyne in the back; and Nunziata, wresting the knife from his fist, had straightway avenged the deed. Then, with a sobbing wail, she was on the ground, fondling Burgoyne, distraught with love and grief.

But it is common knowledge that Burgoyne and his wife have long been valued in many and divers circles. Be it said, then, that it was characteristic of Burgoyne to complain, on his sickbed, that Fate the Poet had inexcusably bungled the drama. He had to learn from official sources that Nunziata's father owed his death some years before to the soldiery. And there were no possible grounds for making out Gaetano appropriately the vengeful son of a bandit he had winged or killed. At all events, he would have Nunziata divide her care as nurse between himself and his rival. And, when both were convalescent, he would set up Gaetano in a farm by way of return for services rendered. Could he do less for the scamp? he asked. If this strong and sweet daughter of Skanderbeg gave her prompt and decisive answer to his own hot wooing, did he not owe it to Gaetano? While as for Nunziata's motives, he left such matters for his subtle and foolish Sumner to think over during his forced return to Oxford and that *vivâ voce* examination which awaited him. They were of no moment to him. It was enough that she loved. The man of action, he declared, ever turns his gaze towards the endless fields of future endeavour.

VLAN.

FROM THE OUTPOSTS.

A FORAY.

ALL along the North-Western Frontier of India the barren hills rise out of the plains as if from the levels of an ocean, and on the shingle below those hills there runs the Frontier Road. A strange and incomprehensible road it seems. It begins at nowhere in particular, but not far from where the Indus rushes forth from the unknown wilderness of the Western Himalayas. It meanders on past Peshawur and the mouth of the Khyber Pass, past Kohat, Bannu, and Dera Ismail Khan, garrisons unknown to fame but now and then of mushroom notoriety as starting-points of small wars. Farther south it runs into the torrid deserts of Baluchistan and Scinde, and finally goes goodness knows where, but possibly into the Indian Ocean, and maybe under it, till it reappears at Aden and marks the landward edge of that disjected bit of the Indian Empire.

It is a simply made road, and little thought went to its planning. It has no bridges, and when it meets a stream it ceases, but resumes its march on the other bank. Its surface is the original metalling laid down by Mother Nature at the Creation in a giant causeway all round the Borderland, and through this stony waste some puny mortal hand has cleared away the larger stones to either side of an eight-foot track, and that is the Frontier Road.

At first sight its utility is not obvious, for the traffic it supports is light and seems to pass not along the roadway, but across it. From Afghanistan and Persia, from Central Asia and the frontier no-man's land, the traffic comes and goes to British India and back. In truth, the road was never meant to be travelled along, and very unpleasant adventures are apt to befall those who do so, especially at night. But it justifies its existence by roughly marking a line within which you will be hanged if you cut your enemy's throat. West of the road, or if you wish to be quite safe, west of the crest of the nearest ridge of foot-hills, you may do your killing and go safe, provided only that your enemy has no relatives. Should he unfortunately have any, the matter becomes more complicated, as they will zealously pursue the blood feud till you or one of your kin has been violently sent to join the first victim. Thereafter the deal is with you again, and you must deal or be dishonoured, for the law of revenge is the only one that is binding in Yagistan, that empire of anarchy that lies between the Frontier Road and the nebulous limits of the authority of Kabul.

Where Yagistan marches

with the Punjab on the east, there dwells that great unruly cousinship of the Pathans whose misdeeds are ever troubling the peace of the Indian Government. Here the mountains and plateaux of Afghanistan decline into the tangle of broken hills which girdle the plains that stretch east and south across the Punjab to the sea. It is as if a gigantic harrow had scratched the face of the earth and drawn it out eastwards into a glacis of parallel ridges and furrows, planned to produce a clannish and robber race. To north and south the mountain barriers shut off each clan from its neighbours, while to each a gateway to the fertile plains below stands temptingly open, and the fastnesses of the inner highlands offer a secure retreat in time of reprisals. But though the raiding of the plains is thus indicated by Nature to be the normal occupation of the Pathans, the presence of that sketchy frontier road, sign-manual of the overwhelming power that traced it, calls up an evil vision of blown-up towers and tribesmen hunted through their own hills by stolid columns of Feringhi soldiery.

Now, not far from where a great camp of these peace-enforcing soldiers drill or perspire, according to the season of the year, the tribe of the Sherannis dwell in one of the furrows, and in the next furrow on the south live their distant cousins and bitter enemies the Usterzais. The tribes are real enough but, for a reason given later on, the names are not. South of the Sherannis a lofty range parts them from the Usterzais, but on the north they are free from care, for a mighty river rolling down from the Hindu Kush fences that side from all danger, and on the low hills about its banks their flocks have grazed in safety till not a tree or shrub remains, for there is no enemy of afforestation like the Indian goat. Between these riverain hills and the great southern range lie a few square miles of gritty clay, detritus from the hills or silt from the primeval ocean that once covered this land, and thereon stand the Sheranni villages. One type stands for all of them. A high wall of clay shuts in an acre or so of ground. At one or two corners of the wall stand towers, built up of courses of clay with bases solid for the first twelve feet, and loopholes higher up and round the top, a few feet below which projects a fringe of beams and brushwood intended to defeat the ladders of escaladers. The entrance is a manhole in the wall above the level of the solid base, and the rope ladder by which it is reached is hauled up inside when the tower is occupied. At some point under close fire from the towers a heavy door in the wall gives access to a seeming huddle of flat-roofed huts, with noisome spaces in between them where cattle are housed at night. The planners of the town seem to have built the huts with a total disregard of order and symmetry, yet, if you will pass through the

narrow alleys, you may, if you have an eye for such things, observe that a certain principle is scrupulously regarded. Vauban himself could not find fault with their arrangement as traverses and parados against bullets from outside musketry. From end to end you may walk between the mud walls and never catch a glimpse of the towers of the other villages round, or of the hills that lie within easy rifle-shot. Each village is in fact a very complete fort, of which the towers are the keeps and each house a part of the defence. It needs no long study to see that they would be very unpleasant places to assault without the aid of artillery first to brush the defenders from the parapets, for the furlong or two that separates each from its neighbour is kept studiously clear of cover, and forms a glacis of gruesome potentialities for the slaughter of the assailants.

It is not against some tribal foe that these villages stand thus armed and ready, but against each other, for all are at war among themselves, and it is no kid-glove war they wage but a merciless battle for existence. If it should hap that the defenders of some village become reduced below the number with which resistance may be prolonged, that section of the tribe must either obliterate itself or be obliterated. On a night they disperse over the face of the earth, and become hewers of wood and drawers of water to clans dwelling beyond their valley. Their place knows them no more, and the victors possess the empty village and the scanty lands that maintained it.

From time to time the need to sow or reap, or some other common interest, brings about a general truce, and on a morning in May of a certain year men come from every village and build stones into a cairn in the middle of the valley. This is the cairn of peace, and while it stands the erstwhile enemies mingle and loaf carelessly beneath the loopholes that so lately would spit smoke and lead at the mere flutter of a rag. This peace will last till the harvest is gathered, for the year is one of a bumper crop,—good winter rains and the lusty kiss of an Indian sun have made the wheat spring from even the most hopeless-looking ground. Every corner that the hillman's scraggy oxen can cover with the plough becomes a cornfield. Clay flat and sandy hummock give forth their increase, and up around the flinty bases of the hills, where the ground seems mere road-metal and boulder, the coming crop has spread a sheet of green.

After harvest is over murder will probably recommence, but meantime the rifles are stacked inside the villages and their owners take their ease in the morning sun, while the women, or those of them who have become old and ugly, troop off to the hills on the south to cut wood for sale to the distant British garrison. Along with the women straggle the combined flocks and herds of the valley, for grass as well as

wood grow better where the northern aspect and the tribal feud with the Usterzais have given plant life some respite from scorching suns and unremitting grazing. The shepherds are the urchins of the tribe, whose sole duty this is until they reach manhood and its rights of doing nothing. They are a merry shrill-voiced crew, barefooted and shaven of head, their polls covered by close-fitting skull-caps so old and greasy that they show black and shiny within and without. In summer as in winter a cotton shirt, quite innocent of the laundry, forms their one and only garment. They have no sheep-dogs, but instead they all carry slings, woven pouch and thong of the fibres of the dwarf palm, and with these they project stones with accuracy to astonishing distances, and so head or turn the errant members of their flock.

In advance of every one there lounge along two or three men with rifles, and farther back a few others follow. These are the escort, supposed to be furnished by all the villages in turn. They are few, considering the strained relations of the tribe with the Usterzais over the ridge, but watch duty is not popular and the men parade or not pretty much as they like: naturally they frequently do not like, and the escorts are weak accordingly. These men go silent, as if bored by the chattering crowd, but in reality because the presence of men among women, even if old and ugly, not of their own family, is only tolerated on the ground of necessity, and any attempt to hold conversation would be extremely bad form. The women, however, do the talking for both sides, even as evil-disposed persons have before now affirmed to be their habit. They wear long shirts of dark blue with embroidered edges reaching to the knee, and baggy pyjamas, striped red and blue, of the pattern commonly worn by Mahomedan women. They are well-featured enough, though wrinkled and work-worn, and their dark hair might be an ornament were it not done up in tightly twisted rat-tails whose tapering points are whipped round with black thread. Once no doubt they were comely, but their life of hard work, poverty, and anxiety helps to shorten the short-lived beauty of the East, and so from being the mistresses of the husbands who bought them for hard cash, they become their chattels, valued now only according to their working powers. Ploughing and fighting are for the men, the women do the rest, and their quotable value apart from good looks depends on their capacity for work.

The procession follows a dry watercourse to where a gash in high cliffs of blue limestone gives entrance to the hills. Beyond this gorge lies a great basin, open, but sloping upwards to the summits of the range. From the main channel innumerable tributaries branch off, twisting and turning among rocks and precipices. Between the ravines lie tracts of rugged

mountain, great slopes of rock and grass, or terraced cliffs standing over one another like gigantic stairs, with a tread of hundreds of feet. All these ravines lead up to the high ground of the range, but the main watercourse is the only one that leads to a pass by which a man may cross the range into the Usterzais valley; the others sooner or later end in some unclimbable cliff or waterfall.

Outside the hills the country looks barren, save for the transient green of the crops, but within their folds the dark foliage of ilex and juniper fills all the ravines, and a tawny grass of a pleasant resinous scent grows wherever a handful of soil has lodged among the stones. This same yellow grass is largely responsible for the aspect of unchanging red-hot sterility presented by the hills of the Indian frontier, but in spite of its taste, goats and fat-tailed sheep find it good fodder.

Each of the tributary ravines diverts its own party till the whole throng has scattered among them, moving ever on and upwards to reach the better grazing of the higher ground. The main glen is the point of danger, and the riflemen stay in it and climb the hillside on either hand a short rifle-shot in front of their *protegées*. The inadequacy of the escort is now very apparent. The groups of three or four men on each side of the gorge are separated by several hundred yards of the worst sort of going, and can neither act in concert nor make much of a fight by themselves. The Pathan has his share of the *insouciance* of the Oriental, and thinks it better to run a risk than to perform an unpleasant duty. However, in Yagistan, to run risks is to court trouble, and on this particular occasion the courtship is going to be successful. Half-way up to the crest of the pass some score of chosen Usterzai fighting-men have lain in ambush and watched since early dawn. Yesterday at dusk they stole from their villages and held their way all through the night, hiding their doings under cover of darkness lest some chatterer's tongue should outstrip their march before their trap was laid and ready for the light. They crossed the unguarded pass and groped their way down on this side while it was yet night, then in the early grey they divided their strength, and a half climbed to each side of the ravine and chose positions with a clear view in front and sheltered lines of retreat, so that they could draw off should discretion appear the better part. The rest of their plan has the simplicity that makes for success in war. If the escort is sufficiently weak to admit of its complete and rapid annihilation, shoot them down and drive off what spoil comes to hand; but if not, beat a timeous retreat and come another day.

These lurking riflemen need no stiff-lipped sergeants to tell them when to open fire. The Pathan knows by murderous

experience just how close his man must be to put missing out of the question. They are still waiting to let the victims come within the fatal distance, when a sunbeam glints on the polished muzzle of a rifle and sparkles back into the eyes of one of the escort. It is enough: with a shout he darts towards the nearest boulder, running zigzag and unslinging his unready rifle as he goes. But knowledge came too late, and even as he turns the fusilade begins, fire comes from every bush, and he is wounded before he reaches his cover, while the rest of the escort go down almost in their tracks, and where they fall they die, for the merciless bullets of frontier war beat down on dead and wounded alike till all have gained the inertness that cannot be simulated. As for the wounded survivor, his minutes are numbered, and he knows it, but, like a gallant man, he dies fighting, if perchance he may hold back the enemy awhile and let his charges escape. But his defence only lasts till the Usterzais creep round the flanks so that his boulder no longer screens him from their fire, and the matter is soon settled. The foray is ready for the driving, and the assailants leave their ambush and plunge down the hill to seize their spoil. They have need of haste, for at the first sound of the alarm a simultaneous and rapid flight began. The old women dropped their bundles of sticks and ran like elderly Atalantas, while the shepherd boys hurried away the goats with volleys of stones, accompanied by language of a kind luckily unheard from Western lips of similar age. But half a dozen women at four hundred rupees each and a few score goats at perhaps three rupees a-head are a good enough haul, and a handy little party to manage, and having secured these the raiders are content. With Oriental arts of twisting of tails for the animals and a dagger-prick for passive resisters among the women, the capture is quickly put on the move to the Pass, hurried on by a few of the Usterzais, while the majority bring up the rear to deal with the pursuit which they know will soon be on its way.

The first rattle of the musketry was enough to let the hearers know that all was not well in the hills, and knowledge of previous happenings sends the shepherd boys nearest the plains racing to carry the tidings. A breathless flight to the mouth of the gorge, and a shout from there to the nearest village, brings about an immediate and perfect mobilisation of the whole fighting strength of the Sheranni tribe. From tower to tower the shout is passed till it reaches the village of the biggest man in the valley. Forthwith over all the plain there sounds a deep persistent boom whose meaning every man knows. It is the voice of a giant kettle-drum, the tocsin of the tribe, only heard when public need stills private feuds and bids each and all come forth to fight a common foe. The pos-

sible ownership of the stolen goods is incitement enough to turn out, besides that the face of the shirker would be blackened and his house burned by the council of the greybeards if any one failed to answer the summons, so there is no mustering or calling of the roll. Each man seizes rifle and bandolier and goes. Turbans and other picturesque drapery are discarded. Sandals of grass rope, a skull-cap, a shirt, and pyjamas knotted above the knee, form the fighting garb of the tribesman, a rifle and forty rounds his arms. Little wonder these light-armed mountaineers give the Indian soldier a bad time when an expedition is sent into Yagistan. Each village pours out its quota, and in a few minutes eight hundred armed men are travelling at a steady trot towards the hills. The pace is pretty uniform on the level; fat men do not occur among the hill Pathans, as the continual watchfulness necessary to preserve a whole skin in that climate of vendetta counteracts any tendency towards adiposity. But once the hills are entered lung capacity and strength of heart begin to tell, and as the column breasts the increasing gradients of the torrent-beds, it automatically assorts itself into the similitude of a well-ordered force. The keenest and swiftest win to the front and become scouts to the slower strength of the main body. To-day, however, an ambuscade is little to be feared, as the Usterzais will only fight if it is necessary to gain time, but not merely to notch a few Sherannis lives to the tribal score.

For the best part of an hour the hunters go on and up, swiftly and in silence, for there is little breath to spare for conversation. The ravine grows steeper and steeper, huge boulders as large as houses lie across it, and the sides are covered with holm oak and sloe, grown, unscathed by the woodcutter, into sizeable trees. Higher still they reach the bare grass slopes that skirt the topmost line of crags whose splintered summits stand out along the crest of the range like spines on the back of some prehistoric saurian. Here at last the quarry is viewed. The road to the pass turns sharply aside from the ramparts of rock that bar a straightforward ascent, and runs to the right beneath them for three-quarters of a mile to where a break in the rock wall leads into the Usterzai Valley. To the left the frowning precipices deny all passage save by a detour of many miles. There is no road but that by the right, and already the enemy have manned the heights that command it, and are sending their bullets hissing round the heads of the foremost pursuers. But there on the slopes, clearly to be seen, and still on this side of the pass, are the tribal goats and old women and a few Usterzais urging them forward and striving to bring them into the gut of the pass before the rescue arrives. But they are too late. The leading runners throw themselves down, still all breathless, and now their bullets

begin to sing across the eight hundred yards of open, and flop ominously round the drivers, intermittently at first, but faster and faster as more men come up, till the drumming of the rifles becomes a continuous roar, and the captors are forced to leave the goats to resume their interrupted grazing while they themselves seize the women by wrist or hair, and by this ungallant means secure immunity and reach the pass unhurt along with their prisoners. The riflemen on the crags now spitefully try to destroy what they cannot hold, and turn their fire on to the innocent goats. A successful shot is signalled by shouted taunts as to the courage of the Sherannis and the fickleness of their womenkind, while the carcass of the stricken beast rolls down the slope, a sheer waste of what would be good meat for a true believer if only one were at hand to cut its throat with due ritual before life is extinct.

The Sherannis lying behind the rocks are no cowards, but even so they allow themselves a pause before venturing across that bullet-swept expanse. Yet brave men seldom lack a leader, and when a rifle and a wife represent the invested savings of a lifetime, a man will freely risk his life rather than lose either. Alam Khan, owner of one of the captured ladies, leaps up to head the rush. Round him the bullets fall in a spray of lead, and his career is short. Fifty yards from his cover he goes down with a thigh-bone splintered by the cruel soft bullet of the Snider rifle, and like those other wounded of the escort, he too is shot to death as he lies bleeding. But the floodgates are opened, and a stream of men follow where he led, while fresh arrivals sustain the musketry and cover the advance of their charging comrades. Now, too, there is safety in numbers. The fire that was deadly when concentrated on one, spreads itself over the many with small effect. Here and there a man drops under it, but escapes the merciless attention paid to Alam Khan. Even as it was at Dargai in 1897, the rush of a mass of men succeeds where the piecemeal advance of small parties would fail. And as at Dargai the defenders show discretion and decline the crowning mercy of the assault, thinking it better to live to fight another day. The black dots that were their heads no longer show against the skyline, and the owners of the dots are making very good time down the other side of the mountain long before the Sherannis have reached the pass and begun to spread right and left along the crest in the search for their vanished opponents. But fighting is over for this day and a halt is called in the pursuit, for the sound of the firing has reached the Usterzai villages where they lie four thousand feet below, and in the clear mountain air a swarm of men is seen issuing from them and making to the hills. A fight in the open with the full

strength of each tribe engaged, and the accompanying casualty roll, is rather more than the Sherannis are prepared to undertake for the sake of a few old females. Any wounded goats are slaughtered with the proper invocation to God and the Prophet, and are carried off to be eaten in the evening. Alam Khan's body has already been laid on a bier of branches of oak and wild olive, and is on its way to the village cemetery, where the warrior will take his rest with his face turned towards holy Mecca, while his widow goes down to her captivity. The men who reached the pass fall back from it on to the main body, covered during their retreat by a few scouts who remain on the heights until the rest are out of danger, and then themselves run back at speed till they have left the fateful grass slopes behind them. Beyond this little bit of rear-guard work no further precautions are taken. Men go down a hill quicker than they come up. The Usterzais are coming up, and the Sherannis prefer to complete their descent and get out of range before the others reach the top. So they stand not upon the order of their going but go at once, and with them goes a white man whose attendance at this purely tribal tea-party should by rights subject him to an official wigging for thus running the risk of getting involved in a matter which has no concern with frontier politics. But perhaps the experience is worth the chance of a reprimand. As for the fate of the Sheranni women, and the vengeance taken for Alam Khan's death, they will no doubt furnish the Sherannis with material for another act in the long-drawn-out Sheranni-Usterzai tragedy.

A REVOLUTION IN LAND WARFARE?

PRACTICAL experience in face of the enemy may prove that air-craft are destined to exert less influence over the warfare of the future than recent events during military manœuvres in this country and on the Continent would seem to foreshadow. These engines of discovery have yet to be tried during actual hostilities where both belligerents are making use of flying corps, before a final verdict on the subject can properly be arrived at. As our War Office Memorandum, which was issued before the operations in East Anglia began, very properly pointed out with reference to the campaign in North Africa, where aeronautics have played a not unimportant part, the Italians in that theatre of conflict have had the air to themselves. No conclusive test of this new arm is possible so long as its capabilities in a campaign are only put to trial by one side, or so long as they are only tested during the progress of peace exercises. Nevertheless, soldiers will be well advised to look ahead in this matter, and they ought to be prepared for at least the possibility of aviation bringing about such far-reaching developments as to amount to a transformation in the conduct of war.

The achievements of the Royal Flying Corps in September, on the first occasion of this branch of his Majesty's Service conducting operations on an important scale in connection with other troops, were undoubtedly remarkable. Except on the one occasion when a whole division—a somewhat important item, it should be observed—contrived to conceal itself from overhead observation for a considerable time, the airmen attached to each of the respective sides in the Army Manœuvres ascertained and reported the movements of the opposing army during the period of the approach marches with significant despatch and accuracy. During the previous week, moreover, on the occasion of the Command Manœuvres of the Aldershot troops under Sir Douglas Haig, scouting on the part of aviators twice over made known to the commander of one of the contending forces the strength, the position, and the movements of his antagonist. That being the case, it will not perhaps be inexpedient to consider briefly how far these triumphs, triumphs which are undisputed, ought to be discounted before they can fairly be accepted as applicable to the conditions that arise in real war.

The concealment of the 4th Division near Saffron-Walden for some hours seems to suggest that, now that the scouting capabilities of airmen are realised, troops may often be able to hide themselves completely from this kind of overhead observation. The feasibility of doing so, however, obviously

depends very largely upon the topographical character of the theatre of war. The east of England, and indeed most parts of the more thickly populated districts of the United Kingdom, offer exceptional facilities for the hiding of large bodies of men. The roads and lanes in general are flanked by substantial hedgerows, which offer effective cover at least to foot-soldiers. In Cambridgeshire and Suffolk, moreover, there is commonly a strip of grass running along one or both sides of the roadway, and it is on the actual roadway that troops show up best to the aerial scout. Woods and coppices, furthermore, abound in this part of the country, and these provide excellent means of concealment so long as a force is at the halt. Devices which were successfully put in force in the north-western corner of Essex by part of General Grierson's army might, on the other hand, prove ineffective and even impracticable for deceiving aeronauts were an attempt made to apply them to Salisbury Plain; and it has to be remembered that Salisbury Plain much more nearly represents the type of terrain on which European campaigns are normally fought out than does the intersected region through which the right flank of the Blue Army made its advance after detraining west of Cambridge. It is obviously easier, again, for troops to hide when they are at the halt than when they are on the march, and they cannot always be at the halt. Infantry on the move may be able to scuttle away to one side on the approach of an aeroplane being reported, and to crouch under the hedge, when there is one; but guns and other vehicles cannot conduct themselves thus. The theory that armies on the move by daylight will be able to hide themselves from aeronauts does not, in fact, hold water except when the conditions happen to be abnormal. And troops will often find the task of concealment by no means an easy one to carry out, even when they are at the halt.

Then, again, there is the question of difficulties due to nature—*i.e.*, of thick weather interfering with observation, or of strong winds making flight impracticable. Now, mist and fogs must necessarily render the efforts of the aerial scout abortive; but it has to be remembered that the same thing applies also to mounted troops or cyclists when engaged in reconnaissance work. If such atmospheric conditions prevail, observation in any form becomes almost impossible. Still, there is one set of atmospheric conditions which will always seriously prejudice the work of the airman, although it would not adversely affect the operations of the vedette—the conditions arising where the clouds are hanging low. When such conditions prevail, aeroplanes or airships must necessarily manœuvre within dangerously easy range of the troops under observation, as they must be ob-

serving from below cloud level. In so far as the question of strong winds is concerned, the difficulties in the way of aviation are likely to diminish as time goes on. This is mainly a question of the machine, and in view of the amazing progress which the science of construction has been making within the last three or four years, it seems not unlikely that types of air-craft will eventually be designed which can be navigated and can be brought to the ground with reasonable safety in any but the very worst weather.

Finally, and most important by far of all, there is the as yet unsolved problem of the extent to which, in time of war, such air power as may be at the disposal of the enemy, coupled with the artillery fire and musketry of hostile troops, will serve to neutralise the operations of the aviator scout. This must remain to a great extent a matter of conjecture until the veil comes to be torn aside when the next great international conflict arises: it is safe to predict that abundant light will be thrown upon this aspect of the question of military aeronautics whenever there is another war between first-class civilised Powers. Still, without wishing to dogmatise in respect to a matter about which very different opinions are held by the many military authorities who have studied it, it may be suggested that war experience under almost all circumstances seems to indicate that, where it is a question of exploration, it proves easier for the scout to find out what he wants to than it does for protective troops of the other side to keep the scout at a distance. That certainly is the case when cavalry or other mounted troops are pushing their reconnaissances; because as a result of operations of that type both sides generally find out what they wish to, and neither side proves successful in keeping the hostile patrols at arm's length. The initiative rests, in fact, with the scout. Aerial observers will no doubt often be intercepted; many will come to grief, others will be driven away without ascertaining what they want, others again will be so harassed by opposition that the information which they bring back will be incomplete, and may even be misleading. But some will succeed in spite of obstacles of every kind, and their intelligence may well suffice for the commander who has to base his plans upon the data that they bring him.

The art of aerial operations is not, needless to say, being studied in military circles merely from the point of view of executing strategical and tactical exploration. How also to defeat the machinations of hostile air-craft is a subject which is receiving attention on all sides, and it is consequently certain that scouting by aeroplane will prove a far more delicate and dangerous service in time of war than it is in the time of peace. Awkward problems of all kinds arise in connection with the question.

How to distinguish friend from foe is one of them, and it may here be observed that this difficulty is always likely to present itself in acuter form to artillery or other troops who are not experts in aviation, than it would to the trained *personnel* included in flying corps. It must also be remembered that certain types of air-craft are already being armed with forms of machine-gun to enable them to fight while on the move. It remains to be seen how far musketry and gun-fire from the ground will prove a serious danger to aerial scouts; but it should be noted in connection with the capabilities of artillery in this direction, that the gunner usually depends not so much upon what he learns from range-finders as upon actually observing where his projectiles strike, and that when his target happens to be floating in the air this invaluable aid is lost to him unless he actually hits the mark. Ordnance has already been designed for engaging air-craft from the ground; but it may be found impracticable to invent a mounting which will enable a gun to be used for firing at troops in the ordinary way, and which will at the same time admit of the great elevations that become necessary when opposing aviators. Should that be so, an army will hardly be likely to have large numbers of field-pieces with which to combat hostile flying corps. It may of course turn out that the defensive will gain the mastery in this particular field of warlike endeavour, and will reduce the aerial scout to virtual impotence, but the balance of probability would seem to tend in the other direction.

Nor should it be forgotten that in its application to military operations, air power is still practically in its infancy. Even our Royal Flying Corps, which performed such remarkable services at the recent manœuvres, has as yet enjoyed but limited opportunities for observing armies on the march and at the halt. The execution of such tasks with accuracy and confidence must obviously need plenty of practice under very varying conditions, and it is only during short periods of the year that service airmen will ever obtain much practical experience in military observation. It also remains to be seen whether bodies of our troops will next year find it possible to conceal themselves from overhead observation quite so easily as they did once or twice in East Anglia, unless the circumstances happen to greatly favour them.

All things considered, it is not easy to escape from the conclusion that, as a method of ascertaining the disposition, the movements, and the strength of armies in the field in time of war, aviation will exert an enormous influence over struggles of the future. It may not quite come to be a question of the opposing commanders playing the game "with all the cards upon the table," as some aerial enthusiasts are already prophesying.

But the tendency may well be in that direction, and it becomes an interesting subject of speculation how such a development is likely to affect operations of war in general.

Now, the advent of the air scout seems in the first place likely to profoundly modify the *rôle* usually accorded to mounted troops when in the field. Ever since the Franco-German War it has come to be recognised by all students of the military art that the primary and most important duty of bodies of horsemen on active service is that of discovering what the enemy is about. Affiliated to that duty is the responsibility for preventing the enemy from ascertaining the position, the movements, and the intentions of the army by which the bodies of horsemen are sent out. Work of the former character inevitably imposes a heavy strain upon the mounted troops of both belligerents in time of war. It involves prolonged and rapid marches, marches which sap the efficiency of the cavalry or mounted rifles, as the case may be, in consequence of the wear and tear to which it unavoidably exposes the horses. Difference of opinion may exist on the subject of the tactical employment of cavalry on the battlefield,—the most effective methods of combat which horse-soldiers can employ during a collision in these days of arms of precision is frequently a subject of controversy; but it is agreed on all hands that mobility is the true *raison d'être* of the arm, and that this mobility is wrapped up in the question of the condition of the chargers. Supposing then, for the sake of argument, that mounted troops could be entirely, or very largely, relieved of the work of strategical exploration, it would follow that their potentialities in other directions would be increased, that they would have reserves of mobility to draw upon for some great effort of which, under existing conditions, they are apt to be deprived, and that they would always be at the disposal for tactical operations of the commander of the force with which they were acting, instead of their being practically ear-marked for special service.

Our own *Cavalry Training* prescribes with admirable precision and clearness the system under which reconnaissance service in advance of an army should be carried out by the bulk of its mounted forces, how the strategical patrols are pushed out and supported by stronger detachments, how these bodies act like a magnet attracting similar hostile bodies to meet them and to stay their operations of discovery, and how these local encounters are likely to culminate in a great tactical collision in which the main bodies of the mounted troops on the two contending sides fight for the mastery. Although there may be differences in regard to certain points of detail, this same theory of cavalry employment is (or was until very recently) generally accepted on the Continent. But what, after all, does this amount to?

Supposing that the respective cavalries are reasonably well matched, then the contemplated tactical collision means that mounted troops on the beaten side will be crippled, and that those on the victorious side will be so badly shaken that their efficiency for the time being will have been sacrificed. In short, the generally accepted principles governing the employment of mounted troops at the outset of a campaign, involve their knocking themselves to pieces on reconnaissance service before the opposing infantries and artilleries meet in combat,—in other words, before the real fighting begins. This reconnaissance service is of such vital importance that the virtual sacrifice of the mounted troops in its interest is fully justified so long as no other means of obtaining the requisite information exist; but if that service can be carried out even better by a totally different arm, then the whole scheme falls to the ground and the mounted troops can be made fully available for employment in other directions where their especial characteristics can be given full play.

Protective duties will of course still have to be performed by mounted troops. A screen thrown out in advance of the army during its forward movements so as to warn it before sudden attack, and so as to protect it to some extent from the prying of hostile patrols, remains in any case a necessity. But duties of this kind do not impose the same strain upon cavalry and mounted rifles as does the service of strategical exploration, nor do they demand a great development of force.

During the recent French Army Manœuvres south of Loire, the rival commanders-in-chief, from the outset, turned their cavalry to account rather by pushing brigades ahead to seize points of importance in the theatre of operations, than as a means of ascertaining the movements of the enemy. It stands to reason that horsemen will be better prepared for performing services of this character if their mounts are reasonably fresh, and if their ranks have not suffered a certain amount of disorganisation as a result of previous affrays, than if the squadrons have been engaged on trying marches and have been involved in anticipatory conflicts. Similarly it is obvious that, when it comes to a question of pursuit after a victory—a situation in which mounted troops can act to particularly good purpose,—the less strain that has been previously put upon such troops, the more decisive will be the results of their intervention. If airmen can, wholly or partially, replace cavalry and mounted rifles as the eyes and ears of an army, it follows that the cavalry and mounted rifles will be able to perform their other functions all the more effectively, and it follows furthermore that they will be more absolutely at the disposition of their commander-in-chief for delivering sudden strokes when an oppor-

tunity arises than would be possible in the absence of aircraft. The hussar and the lancer have no reason to regard their supplantment by flying corps as a dire calamity. Rather would such a development in the art of war tend to relieve them of duties which are apt to virtually banish them from off the battlefield.

But aeronautics also promise to influence military operations in other directions besides that of transforming the *rôle* of mounted troops. Present indications point unmistakably to a condition of affairs when generals at the head of armies in the field will as a rule be better informed of the position and movements of their antagonists than has generally been the case in latter-day warfare. This is likely to prove true both in the domain of strategy and in that of tactics, and it becomes an interesting subject for speculation how such a state of things will influence soldiership as a whole. Experts are bound to differ over a question such as this, but there is one point on which all will probably be in agreement. It is safe to predict that, in view of the coming of the aerial scout, opposing armies will be compelled, at least at times, to take measures for concealing their dispositions and intentions such as have not up to the present time been held to be indispensable.

As has been already pointed out, the topographical features of the theatre of operations in given conditions may greatly facilitate concealment. The prevalence of woods and of hedges and of broken ground in general is all in favour of troops hiding themselves when at the halt, and sometimes even when on the move. But the influence of the existence of such features will in most cases only be relative. The commander who really wishes to make sure of deceiving his opponent will often have to move by night, or else he will have to remain halted after so manœuvring as to make his opponent anticipate a nocturnal change of dispositions. Important strategical marches were carried out under cover of darkness during the recent German Army Manœuvres in Saxony, with the object of screening the troops concerned from observation by aeroplanes and airships. This is an obvious device; but it is one that is better adapted to the operations of comparatively small armies than it is to the handling of those great hosts which the more formidable military nations of Europe have at their command. The season of the year also influences this question, seeing that the duration of the hours of darkness depends upon it. An army corps on its war-footing moving by a single road will not, for instance, get very far between dusk and dawn in the month of June in temperate latitudes. During the recent manœuvres in East Anglia, the Red and Blue Armies, added together, did not amount to a numerical total exceeding that of an

army-corps-and-a-half when on war establishment; their combined length in column-of-route would indeed have fallen considerably short of that of a full army corps marching with all its impedimenta. From what one sees during peace exercises, one is rather apt to conclude that military forces can be switched about in time of war a good deal more easily than is really the case. In struggles where hundreds of thousands of trained troops take the field on either side, the virtues of the night march as a means of defeating the air-scout will probably turn out to be somewhat illusory.

It is already coming to be recognised that air-power is on the side of the big battalions. In a Kriegspiel which is being played on a single set of maps where every move is visible to both players, the stronger force enjoys greater advantages than it would if the game were being played in the usual way. The whole art of war may almost be said to hinge upon the principle of bringing superior masses of troops to bear at the decisive point, and it is obvious that the general who has the larger army at his disposal can make more certain of utilising his preponderance of strength if he be fully informed of his antagonist's dispositions, than if his information concerning those dispositions be incomplete, contradictory, and confusing. This newest military development seems likely, indeed, to deprive the weaker side of what is often its most effective weapon. Deception of the opponent has ever been a favourite instrument of the Great Captain—it was constantly practised by Marlborough, by Napoleon, and by Stonewall Jackson; but the aerial scout may at any moment lift the purdah and disclose the stratagem to the opposing side. So long as both belligerents are wrapped up in the fog of war, and are, as it were, groping in the dark, strategical insight and genius may enable the commander of the inferior army to contain the bulk of the hostile forces with a show of strength at one point while striking a blow with his main body elsewhere; but the establishment of efficient and trustworthy flying corps may well render such combinations impossible. The enemy may speedily be made aware that the containing force is merely a containing force, and that his antagonist is in reality preparing to deliver his stroke at another point. Even if airmen sometimes signally fail in carrying out their exploration tasks, the dread of the aerial scout is not unlikely to deter a general from attempting a class of manœuvre which, if its object becomes known to the adversary, may bring about a very grave disaster. At the same time, these principles are perhaps applicable rather to strategical than to tactical situations — as a little consideration of the subject suggests.

For it seems likely that reconnaissance by aeroplane or airship will prove more

effective and reliable during the period which covers the concentration of armies and the approach marches preceding the actual tactical encounter, than it will after the rival hosts definitely join issue in battle. As long as an army is not actually in presence of the enemy, the problem of subsistence will generally oblige the divisions and army corps of which it is composed to keep their supply columns, their ammunition trains, and the rest of their impedimenta, more or less concentrated and in close contact with the combatant troops. Vehicles are readily detected by the overhead observer; they are difficult to conceal whether on the move or at the halt, and when massed or when stretched out in huge columns on the road, they may well afford to the hostile scout just those indications of which he stands in need. Whatever may be the case as regards artillery and mounted troops, it will prove more difficult to estimate the strength of infantry which is engaged in the disseminated formations of the day on the battlefield than when that same infantry is on the march or is in bivouac. During the progress of an actual engagement, moreover, a large proportion of the impedimenta accompanying troops in the field are likely to be at a distance. One can well imagine therefore that airmen will often commit serious blunders during reconnaissance operations when hovering above an actual battlefield. It will be the policy of the commander of the weak containing (or holding) force to parade his impedimenta; it will be wise on the part of the commander of the force which is destined to strike the decisive blow if he keeps his waggons at a distance and his combatant forces as far as possible concealed from overhead observation. It should be added that the points at which local and general reserves can best be posted may in the future often be fixed by the presence of woods or villages, simply because troops in concentrated bodies can readily be hidden in them from the flying-men. It seems certain, indeed, that tactical dispositions will be to no small extent influenced by that obligation to keep the enemy's aerial corps in perplexity as long as possible, which the progress in military aviation imposes upon the commander.

It will no doubt also prove to be the case that, where a determined attack is being prepared at some locality on a battlefield or where a counter-attack on an important scale is about to be launched, intelligence of what is impending will often promptly reach the opposing side owing to the activities of its air scouts. This will enable the opposing side to institute counter-measures a little earlier than would otherwise have been practicable. But air-power cannot accelerate the actual movement of troops from one point of a battlefield to another,—it merely permits the order that such a movement shall take place to be issued

somewhat earlier. It should be added that the work of airmen seems likely to become particularly difficult and hazardous when contending armies come actually to grips, owing to the fact that the opposing flying corps will under such circumstances become concentrated, and that they will be particularly well situated to obstruct each other's efforts.

In the foregoing paragraphs only the one phase of aerial operations in war has of course been taken into account,—the influence of flying corps on campaigns of the future has only been discussed from the point of view of scouting and of aerial observation. Many aeronauts believe that bomb-throwing from air-craft will play a most prominent part in warfare of the future, and their anticipations may no doubt prove correct. At the present time, however, the potentialities of the new arm in this direction still remain somewhat indeterminate, and it is not proposed therefore to touch further upon them here,—it suffices for the moment to deal with what are fairly well established facts and to try to deduce lessons from them.

Experiences at German and French manœuvres, no less than at our own, serve to indicate that aerial observation is a factor tending to profoundly modify the conduct of military operations in peace time. The work of Italian aviators in North Africa has proved that scouting by air-craft is readily feasible and highly effective on active service as long as it is not interfered with by the enemy. To what extent the reconnaissance labours of flying corps will be rendered inoperative when both belligerents have such forces at their command during a campaign, and when firearms of various kinds are brought to bear upon aeroplanes and airships from the ground, remains to be seen. But the portents appear to point rather to the likelihood of the exploration duties of airmen becoming more difficult and dangerous under such conditions than they are at peace manœuvres, than to their being rendered impossible. So long as they are possible they will assuredly be carried out by military aeronauts in this and other countries when the enemy is in the gate, and, if so, the courage and skill of the soldier-aviator are likely to bring about something uncommonly like a revolution in war.

CHAS. E. CALLWELL.

HOCKEN AND HUNKEN.

A TALE OF TROY.

BY "Q."

CHAPTER XXI.—THE AUCTION—*continued.*

THEIR estrangement had endured some three months before the rivals came again into public collision.

The beginning of it happened through a very excusable misunderstanding.

Is Christmas Day to be reckoned as an ordinary day of the week, or as a Sunday, or as a *dies non?* The reader must decide.

Christmas Day that year fell on a Friday—one of the three week-days tacitly allotted to Cai, who may therefore be forgiven that he chose to reckon it as coming within the ordinary routine. He did so, and at about three o'clock in the afternoon (which was bright and sunny) he reached the small gate of Rilla, to be aware of 'Bias striding up the pathway ahead of him.

He gave chase in no small choler.

"Look here," he protested, panting; "haven't you made some mistake? This is Friday."

"Christmas Day," answered 'Bias, wheeling about.

"I can't help that. 'Tis Friday."

"An' next year 'twill be Saturday," retorted 'Bias with a sour grin; "if that'll content you, when it comes. None of us can't help it. Th' almanack says 'tis Christmas Day, and ord'nary days o' the week don't count. Besides, 'tis quarter-day, and I've brought my rent."

"I've brought mine, too," replied Cai. "Well, we'll leave it to Mrs Bosenna to settle."

They walked up to the house in silence. Dinah, who answered the bell, appeared to be somewhat upset at sight of the two on the doorstep together. (Yet we know that Dinah never opened the front door without a precautionary survey.) She admitted them to the front parlour, and opining that her mistress was somewhere's about the premises, departed in search of her.

'Bias took up a position with his back to the fire and his legs a-straddle. Cai stuck his hands in his pockets and stared gloomily out of window. For some three minutes neither spoke, then Cai, of a sudden, gave a start.

"There's that Middlecoat!" he exclaimed.

"Hey?" 'Bias hurried to the window, but the young farmer had already passed out of sight.

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"Look here," suggested Cai, "it's just as well we turned up, one or both. That man's a perfect bully, so she tells me."

"She've told me the same, more than once."

"Always pickin' some excuse for a quarrel. It ain't right for a woman to live alongside such a neighbour unprotected."

"So I've told her."

"Well, he's in the devil of a rage just now,—to judge by the look of him, an' the way he was smackin' his leg with an ash-plant as he went by."

"Was he now?" 'Bias considered for a moment. "You may depend he took advantage, not expectin' either of us to turn up to-day. . . . I shouldn't wonder if the maid properly scared him with news we were here."

Sure enough Dinah returned in a moment to report that her mistress was in her rose-garden, and following her thither, they found Mrs Bosenna, flushed of face and evidently mastering an extreme discomposure.

"I—I hardly expected you," she began.

"It's Friday," said Cai.

"It's Christmas Day," said 'Bias. "I reckon he counted on that,—that Middlecoat, I mean."

"Eh? . . . Mr Middlecoat——"

"Saw him takin' his leave, not above three minutes ago."

"You—you saw him taking his leave?"

"Stridin' down the hill, angry as a bull," Cai assured her.

"He's a dreadful man to have for a neighbour," confessed Mrs Bosenna, recovering grip on her composure. "The way he threatens and bullies!"

"I'll Middlecoat him, if he gives me but half a chance!" swore 'Bias.

"If I'd known either of you was in hail. . . . But I reckoned you'd both be countin' this for a Sunday."

"Christmas Day isn't Sunday, not more'n once in seven years," objected 'Bias.

"It's Friday this year," said Cai, with simple conviction.

"Fiddlestick!" retorted 'Bias. "You can't make it out to be like an ordinary Friday—I defy you. There's a—a *feelin'* about the day."

"It feels like Friday to me," maintained Cai.

But here Mrs Bosenna interposed. "'Twon't feel like Christmas to *me* then if you two start arguin'. 'Peace and goodwill' was the motto, as I thought; but I don't see much of either abroad this afternoon."

The pair started guiltily and avoided each other's eyes. Many a time in distant ports they had talked together of Christmas in England and of Christmas fare—the goose, the plum-pudding. They had promised themselves a rare dinner to celebrate their first Christmas in England, and it had come to—what? To a dull meal eaten apart, served by a Mrs Bowldler on the verge of tears, and by a Palmerston frankly ravaged by woe. It had happened—happened past recall,

and as Mrs Bowldler had more than once observed in the course of the morning, the worst was not over yet. "For," as she said, "out of two cold geese and two cold puddings I'll trouble you this next week for your entrays and what-not."

"What was Middlecoat's business, ma'am?—makin' so bold," inquired 'Bias.

"Oh!" she answered quickly, "he's a terrible young man! Wants his own way in everything, like most farmers, and turns violent when he can't get it. . . . He came about next week's sale, among other things."

"What sale, ma'am?"

"Why, surely you must have seen? The bills have been out for days. Squire Willyams is gettin' rid of his land this side of the stream, right down from here to the railway station. Fifty acres you may call it; the most of it waste or else coppice,—and coppice don't pay for cuttin'. You've almost to go down on your knees before anybody will cart it away."

"I *did* hear some word of it down in Toy's shop, now I come to think," said Cai. "But if the land's worthless——"

"It's worth little enough to any one but me and Mr Middlecoat. You see, it marches right alongside our two farms, between them and the Railway Company's strip along the waterside, and—well, Rilla's freehold and Middlecoat's is freehold, and it's nature, I suppose, to be jealous of any third party interlopin'. But I don't want the land, and so I've told him; nor I won't bid against him and run up the price,—though that's what they're aimin' at by an auction."

"Then what in thunder does the fellow want?" demanded 'Bias.

"If you'll climb 'pon the hedge yonder — that's my boundary—you'll see a little strip of a field, not fifty yards wide, runnin' down this side of the plantation. It widens a bit, higher up the hill, but 'tis scarcely more than a couple acres, even so. Barton's Orchard, they call it."

"But what about it?" asked Cai, craning his neck over to examine the plot.

"Why, to be sure I want to take it in for my roses. It lies rather too near the trees to be ideal; but one could trench along the far side and fill the trench with concrete, to check their roots from spreadin' this way; and all the soil is good along this side of the valley."

"Then why not buy it, ma'am, since 'tis for sale? Though for my part," added Cai, looking around upon the beds which, just now, were unsightly enough, with stiff leafless shoots protruding above their winter mulch, "I can't think what you want with more roses than you have already."

"One can never have too many roses," declared Mrs Bosenna. "Let be that there's new ones comin' out every year, faster than you can keep count with them. Folks'll never persuade me that the old H.P.'s

don't do best for Cornwall; but when you go in for exhibition there's the judges and their fads to be considered, and the rage nowadays is all for Teas and high centres. . . . When first I heard as that parcel of ground was likely to come in the market, I sat down and planned how I'd lay it out with three long beds for the very best Teas, and fence off the top with a rose hedge — Wichurianas or Penzance sweet briars—and call it my Jubilee Garden: next year bein' the Diamond Jubilee, you know. All the plants could be in before the end of February, and I'd promised myself that by June, when the Queen's day came round, there shouldn't be a loyaller-bloomin' garden in the land."

"Well," allowed Cai, "that's sensibler anyway than puttin' up arches and mottoes. But what's to prevent ye?"

"'Tis that nasty disagreeable Mr Middlecoat," answered Mrs Bosenna pettishly. "He come and tells me now as that strip has always been the apple of his eye. . . . It's my belief he wants to grow roses against me; and what's more, it's my belief he'd swallow up all Rilla if he could; which is better land than his own, acre for acre. It angers him to live alongside a woman and be beaten by her at every point o' farmin'."

"But you've the longer purse, ma'am, as I understand," suggested 'Bias. "Talkin' o' which——" He fumbled in his breast-pocket and produced an envelope.

"My rent, ma'am."

"Ay, to be sure: and mine, ma'am," Cai likewise produced his rent.

"You are the most punctual of tenants!" laughed Mrs Bosenna, taking the two envelopes. "But after all, they say, short reckonin's make long friends."

She divided a glance between them, to be shared as they would.

"But as I was suggestin', ma'am — why not attend the sale and outbid the fellow?"

"So I can, of course: and so I will, perhaps. Still it's not pleasant to live by a neighbour who thinks he can walk in and hector you, just because you're a woman."

"You want protection: that's what you want," observed 'Bias fatuously.

"In your place," said Cai with more tact, "I should forbid him the premises."

For some reason Mrs Bosenna omitted to invite them to stay and drink tea: and after a while they took their leave together. At the foot of the descent, as they gained the high-road, Cai faced about and asked, "Which way?"

"I was thinkin' to stretch my legs around Four Turnin's," answered 'Bias, although as a matter of fact the intention had that instant occurred to him.

"Well, so long!" Cai nodded and turned towards the town. "Compliments of the season," he added.

"Same to you."

They walked off in opposite directions.

On his way home through the town Cai took occasion to study the Bill of Auction on one of the hoardings. It advertised the property in separate small lots, of which Barton's Orchard figured as No. 9. The bill gave its measurement as 1 acre, 1 rood, 15 perches. The sale would take place at the Ship Hotel, Troy, on Monday, January 4, 1897, at 2.30 P.M. Messrs Dewy and Moss, Auctioneers.

In the course of the next week he made one or two attempts to sound Mrs Bosenna and assure himself that she meant to attend the sale and secure Lot 9; but she spoke of it with an irritating carelessness. Almost it might have persuaded him—had he been less practised in her wayward moods—that she had dismissed the affair from her mind. But on Friday (New Year's Day), as he took leave of her, she recurred to it.

"Dear me," said she meditatively, "I shall not be seeing you for several days, shall I?"

"Eh? Why not?"

"To-morrow's Saturday; then Sunday's our day of rest, as Dinah calls it. On Monday's the auction——"

"Ah, to be sure!" Cai had forgotten this consequence of it, and was dashed in spirits for the moment. "But I shall see you there?"

"Perhaps," she answered negligently. "Shall you be attendin'. Really, now!"

With an accent of reproach he asked how she could imagine that a business so nearly concerning her could find him other than watchful. On leaving he repeated his good wishes for the twelvemonth to come, and with a warmth of intention which she perversely chose to ignore.

To be sure he meant to attend the sale. Nor was he surprised on entering the Ship Inn next Monday, some ten minutes ahead of the advertised time, to find 'Bias in the bar with a glass of hot brandy and water at his elbow. Cai ordered a rum hot.

"Where's the auction to be held?" he inquired of Mr Oke, the landlord.

"Long Room as usual." Mr Oke jerked a thumb towards the stairs; and Cai, having drained his glass, went up.

In the Long Room, which is a handsome apartment with waggon roof and curious Jacobean mouldings dating from the time when The Ship was built to serve as "town house" for one of Troy's great local families, Cai found a sparse company waiting for the sale to open, and noted with momentary dismay that Mrs Bosenna had not yet arrived. But after all, he reflected, there was no need for extreme punctuality—it would take the auctioneer some time to reach Lot 9.

The company included young Mr Middlecoat, of course; and, equally of course, Mr Philp, who had no interest in the sale beyond that of curiosity; some three or four farmers from the back-country, who had apparently come for no purpose but to lend Mr Middle-

coat their moral support, since, as it turned out, not one of them made a serious bid; Squire Willyams' steward, Mr Baker, — a tall, clean-shaven man with a watchful non-committal face; one or two frequenters of The Ship's bar-parlour; and the Quaymaster, by whom (as Barber Toy remarked) any new way of neglecting his duties was hailed as a godsend.

Mr Dewy, the auctioneer, sat with his clerk at the end of the table, arranging his papers and unrolling his map of the property. He was a fussy little man, and made a great pother because the map as soon as unrolled started to roll itself up again. He weighted one corner with the inkpot, and for a second weight reached out a hand for one of three hyacinth vases which decorated the centre of the table. The bulb toppled over, and, sousing into the inkpot, sent up a *jet d'encre*, splashes of which distributed themselves over the map, over the clerk, over Mr Baker's neat pepper-and-salt suit, and over Mr Dewy's own fancy waistcoat. Much blotting-paper was called into use, and many apologies were hastily offered to Mr Baker; in the midst of which commotion 'Bias strolled into the room, and took a seat near the door.

Having mopped the worst of the damage on the map and offered his handkerchief to Mr Baker (who declined it), Mr Dewy picked up a small ivory hammer, stained his fingers with an unnoticed splash of ink on its handle, licked them, wiped them carefully with his handkerchief, picked up the hammer again, and announced that the sale had begun.

"Lot 1.—All that Oak Coppice known as Higher Penpyll. Eighteen acres, one rood, eleven perches. Aspect south and south-west. . . . But there, gentlemen, you are all acquainted with the property, I make no doubt. . . . Any one present not possessed of the sale catalogue? Yes, I see a gentleman over there without one. Mr Chivers, would you oblige?"

The clerk, still attempting to remove some traces of ink from his person, distributed half a dozen copies of the printed catalogue. He gave one to Cai. 'Bias, too, held out a hand and received one.

"Lot 1," resumed Mr Dewy. "All that desirable woodland (oak coppice) known as Higher Penpyll. Eighteen acres and a trifle over. *Now*, what shall we say, gentlemen?"

"Fifty pounds," said Mr Middlecoat promptly.

The auctioneer glanced at Mr Baker, who frowned.

"Now, Mr Middlecoat! Now really, sir! . . . This is serious business, and you offer me less than three pounds an acre! The coppice is good coppice, too."

"'Twill hardly pay to clear," answered Mr Middlecoat. "But why can't ye lump this lot in with the two next? . . . That's my suggestion. If Mr Baker is agreeable? They all run in one stretch, so to speak; and, in biddin' for the whole, a man, would know where he's *to*."

Mr Dewy, speaking in whispers behind his palm, held consultation with Mr Baker.

"Very well," he announced at length. "Mr Baker, actin' on behalf of Squire Willyams, consents to the three lots bein' put up together — *ong block*, as the French would say. No objection? Very well, then. Lot 1, Higher Penpyll, eighteen acres, one rood, eleven perches: Lot 2, Lower Penpyll, forty-two acres, three perches—forty-two almost exact: Lot 3, Wooda Wood, forty acres, one rood, one perch; all in oak coppice, two to five years' growth. What offers, gentlemen, for this very desirable timbered estate?"

"Three-fifty!"

"Come, Mr Middlecoat!" protested the auctioneer, after another glance at Mr Baker. "Indeed, sir, you will not drive me to believe as you're jokin'?"

Mr Middlecoat, whose gaze had rested on Mr Baker, faced about, and, looking down the table, caught the eye of one of his supporters, who nodded.

"Three-seven-five!" called out the supporter.

"Four hundred!" Mr Middlecoat promptly capped the bid.

"That's a little better, gentlemen," Mr Dewy encouraged them.

Apparently, too, it was the best. For some three minutes he exhorted and rebuked them, but could evoke no further bid. There was a prolonged pause. The auctioneer glanced again at Mr Baker, who, while seemingly unaware of the appeal, slightly inclined his head. Mr Middlecoat's eyes had rested on Mr Baker all the while.

"One hundred acres, as you may say, at less than four pounds the acre! Well, if any man had prophesied this to me on the day when I entered business——" Mr Dewy checked himself, and let fall the hammer. "Mr Middlecoat, sir, you're a lucky man." He announced, "Lot 4—Two arable fields, known as Willapare Veor and Willapark Vear respectively: the one of six acres, one rood, and six perches; the other of three and a half acres."

As the auction proceeded, even the guileless Cai could not help detecting an air of unreality about it. Mr Middlecoat bade for everything. Now and again, if Mr Middlecoat miscalculated, a friend helped and raised the price by a very few pounds for Mr Middlecoat to try again: which Mr Middlecoat duly did. It became obvious that Mr Middlecoat had somehow possessed himself of a pretty close guess at what price Squire Willyams would part with each lot instead of "buying in"; that Mr Baker knew it; that the auctioneer knew it; that everyone in the room knew they knew; and that nobody in the room was disposed to prevent Mr Middlecoat's acquiring whatever was offered.

Under these conditions the sale proceeded swiftly, pleasantly, and without a hitch. Cai cast frequent glances back at the door. But the minutes

sped on, and still Mrs Bosenna did not appear.

"Lot 9.—A field known as Barton's Orchard. Two perches only short of two acres——"

"Say twenty-five," said Mr Middlecoat carelessly.

Again Cai glanced back. The farm land had been fetching on an average some twenty to twenty-five pounds an acre. . . . Why was Mrs Bosenna not here?

On an impulse — annoyed, perhaps, by the young farmer's take-it-for-granted tone — he called out "Thirty!"

The auctioneer and Mr Baker—who had just signified, by a slight frown, that he could not accept the young farmer's bid—glanced up incuriously. Mr Middlecoat, too, turned about, not recognising the voice of his new "bonnet," —to use a term not unfamiliar in auctioneering.

But Cai did not catch their glances: for at the same moment he, too, wheeled about at the sound of a deep voice by the door.

"Forty!"

"Eh?" murmured Mr Dewy and Mr Baker, together taken by surprise. And "Hullo, what the dev—" began Mr Middlecoat, when Cai promptly chimed "Fifty!"

For the new bidder was 'Bias, of course: and well, in a flash, Cai guessed his game. Since Mrs Bosenna chose to tarry, 'Bias was bidding against him. It was a duel. Should 'Bias win and present her with these coveted two acres? Never!

"Sixty!"

"Here, I say!" Mr Middlecoat was heard to gasp in protest. But he too began to suspect a game. "Sixty-five!" The duel had become triangular.

"Seventy!"

"Eighty!" intoned 'Bias.

"A hundred!" Cai's jaw was set.

By this time all heads were turned to the new competitors. Two or three of the farmers were whispering, asking if by any chance there was mineral in dispute. One had heard—or so he alleged — that manganese had been discovered somewhere up the valley — before his time—but he could remember his father telling of it.

Mr Middlecoat stepped to the window and glanced out to the square for a moment. He returned, and nervously bade "Ten more!"

"Excuse me," the auctioneer corrected him blandly; "the gentleman at the far end of the room—I didn't catch his name——"

"Hunken," said 'Bias.

"*Captain* Hunken," prompted Mr Philp.

"Er—excuse me, Mr Middlecoat, but Captain Hunken has just offered a hundred-and-twenty."

"And thirty!" chimed Cai.

"Fifty!" intoned back the voice by the door.

Mr Middlecoat passed a hand over his brow. "Another ten," he murmured to the auctioneer. "Is there a boy handy? I—I want to send out a message?"

"Certainly, Mr Middlecoat," agreed the accommodating but bewildered auctioneer, and

turned to his clerk. "Mr Chivers, would you oblige?"

The young farmer scribbled a word or two on a piece of paper, which he folded and gave to Mr Chivers with some hurried instruction; and Mr Chivers steered his way out with agility. But meanwhile the bidding for Barton's Orchard had risen to two hundred.

"Say another ten, to keep it going," proposed Mr Middlecoat, wiping his brow although the weather was chilly. To gain time, he suggested that maybe there was some mistake; that the gentlemen, maybe, had not examined the map of the property and might be bidding for some other lot under a misapprehension.

Mr Baker objected to this. The description of the lots on the catalogue was precise and definite. The two gentlemen obviously knew what they were about. The field was a small field, but the soil was undeniably of the best, and in the interests of the vendor—

"Two hundred and thirty!" interrupted 'Bias.

"—and fifty!" bid Cai.

There was a pause. Mr Dewy looked at Mr Middlecoat, who under his gaze admitted himself willing to stake two hundred and sixty. "Though 'tis the price of building land!"

"Apparently you are willing to give it rather than let the purchase go," observed Mr Baker drily. "For aught you know both these gentlemen may be desiring it for a building site. Did I hear one of them say two-seventy-five? Captain—er—Hunken, if I caught the name?"

"Two-eighty," persisted Cai.

"Two-ninety!"

"Well, make it three hundred, and I've done!" groaned Mr Middlecoat collapsing.

"Three——"

"What's all this?" interrupted a voice, very sweet and cool in the doorway.

"Mrs Bosenna?—Your servant, ma'am!" Mr Dewy rose halfway in his seat and made obeisance. "We are dealing with a lot which may concern you, ma'am; for it runs"—he consulted his map—"Yes—I thought so—right alongside your property at Rilla. A trifle over two acres, ma'am, and Mr Middlecoat has just bid three hundred for it."

"And"—began Cai: but Mrs Bosenna (taken though she must have been by surprise) was quick and frowned him to silence.

"And a deal more than its value, as Captain Hocken was about to say. Will any fool bid more for such a patch?"

Cai and 'Bias stared together, interrogating her. But there was no further bid, and Mr Dewy knocked down the lot at £300.

"Which," said Mrs Bosenna meditatively to Dinah that night, "you may call two hundred and fifty clean thrown into the sea. And the worst is that though Captain Hocken and Captain Hunken are a pair of fools and Mr Middlecoat a bigger fool than either—as it turns out, I'm the biggest fool of all."

"How, mistress?"

"Why, you ninny! They were buying, one against the other, to make me a present, and I stepped in and saved young Middlecoat's face. Yet," she mused, "I don't see what else he could have done. . . . Well, thank the Lord! he'll be humble now, which the others were and he wasn't."

"He's young, anyway," urged Dinah.

"That's something," her mistress conceded. "It gives the more time to rub in his foolishness, and he'll never hear the last of it."

"Three hundred pounds, too!" ejaculated Dinah. "The very sound of it frightens me. A terrible sum to throw to waste."

"I wouldn't say that altogether. . . . Yes, you may unlace me. What fools men are!"

CHAPTER XXII.—THE LAST CHALLENGE.

Next Lady-day, which fell on a Thursday, 'Bias called upon Mrs Bosenna with his rent and with the pleasing announcement that in a week or so he proposed to pay her a further sum of seven pounds eight shillings and fourpence; this being the ascertained half-year's dividend earned by the hundred pounds she had intrusted to his stewardship.

She warmly commended him. "Close upon fifteen per cent! I wonder—but there! I suppose you won't tell me how it's done, not if I ask ever so?"

'Bias looked knowing, and reminded her that to ask no questions was a part of her bargain. As a matter of fact it was also a part of his bargain with Mr Rogers, and he could not have told had he wished to tell.

"I suppose you've heard the latest news?" said he. "They've chosen me on the Harbour Board—Shipowners' representative."

"I didn't even know there had been an election."

"No more there hasn't. Rogers made the vacancy, and managed it for me—retired in my favour, as you might say."

"Seems to me Mr Rogers must be weakenin' in his head."

"Oh no, he's not!" 'Bias assured her with a chuckle. "But he's pretty frail in the body. At his time o' life and with his infirmity a man may be excused, surely?"

"I reckon," said Mrs Bosenna, "there's few would have wept if Mr Rogers had superannuated himself years ago. Now, if you'd told me he was *turned* out——"

"You're hard on Rogers!" he protested, tasting the joke of it.

"Well, I don't think he took on these jobs for his health, as they say; and so it comes hard to believe as he goes out o' them for that reason. But there! he may be an honester

man than I take him for. . . . Well, and so you're becomin' a public man too! I congratulate you."

"I wouldn' call myself *that*," said 'Bias modestly. "But one or two have suggested that a fellow like me, with plenty of time on his hands, might look after a few small things and the way public money's spent on 'em." He might have claimed that at any rate he knew more of harbour affairs than Cai could possibly know of education, but he did not. To their honour, neither he nor Cai—though they ruffled when face to face before folks—ever spoke an ill word behind the other's back. "There's the dredgin', for one thing; and, for another, the way they're allowed to lade down foreign-goin' ships is a scandal."

"Is it the Harbour's business to stop that?"

"It ought to be somebody's business."

"You'll get nicely thanked," she promised, "if you interfere—and as a shipowner's representative too!"

"There's another matter," confessed 'Bias. "They've asked me to put up for the Parish Council next month. There's a notion that, with this here Diamond Jubilee comin' on, the town ought to rise to the occasion."

"And you're the man to give it the lift!" said Mrs Bosenna gaily. "Is Captain Hocken standin' too?"

"They say so."

"Then I'll plump for both of you. Wait, though—I won't promise: or when the canvass starts you'll both be neglectin' me."

The next day Cai called in turn with his rent. "And there's another little matter," said he after handing it to her. "You remember that hundred pounds? Well, there's a half-year's dividend declared and due on it, and the cheque's to arrive some time next week. What's the amount, d'ye guess?"

"Satisfactory?"

"Seven pounds eight shillings and fourpence. . . . Eh? I *thought* it might astonish you."

"It's—it's such an odd amount," she murmured.

"It's close upon fifteen per cent."

"Yes. You took my breath away for the moment. I wonder at the way you men—I mean, I wonder how *you* do it—turnin' money to such good account? 'Tis a gift, I suppose; and you couldn' teach me, even if you would."

Cai received the compliment with a somewhat guilty smile.

"They tell me too," she continued, "that you are standin' for the Parish Council next month."

"Who told you?"

"Oh . . . a little bird!"

Cai did not guess at 'Bias under this description.

"Well, you see, with this here Diamond Jubilee in the offing, there's a feelin' abroad that the town ought to sit up, as the sayin' is——"

"And you're the man to

make it sit up!" said Mrs Bosenna gaily.

"Well now, I want you to help me."

Mrs Bosenna started, alert at once and on her guard, for the game of fence she had chosen to play with these two demanded a constant wariness.

But it seemed that for the moment Cai had no design to press his suit — or no direct design.

"It's this way," he explained. "You know the stevedores, down at the jetties, are givin' their usual Whit-Monday regatta — Passage Regatta, as some call it? Well, they've made me President this year."

"More honours?"

"And I've offered a Cup! which seemed the proper thing to do, under the circumstances. 'A silver cup, value £5, presented by the President, Caius Hocken, Esquire;' it'll look fine 'pon the bills, and it's to go with the first prize of two guineas for sailin' boats not exceedin' fourteen feet over-all. There's what they call a one-design Class o' these in the harbour, which is good sport and worth encouragin'. There's no handicap in it either: the first past the line takes the prize — always the prettiest kind o' race to watch. Now the favour I ask is that, when the time comes, you'll hand the Cup to the winner."

"It'll look rather marked, won't it?" hesitated Mrs Bosenna. She had as small a disinclination as any woman to find herself the central figure in a show, and Cai (had he known it) was attacking one of the weakest points in her siege defences. But to accept this offer — or (if you prefer it) to grant the favour — meant a move on the board which might too easily lead to a trap. "Besides," she objected, "you can't do that sort o' thing without a few words, and I've never made a public speech in my life."

"You leave the speechifyin' to me," said Cai reassuringly: but it did not reassure her at all. ("Good gracious!" she thought. "He's not the sort to take advantage of it—but if he *did!* . . . You can never trust men.")

Cai, misinterpreting the frown on her brow, went on to assure her further that he could manage a speech all right; at any rate, he would be able by Whit-Monday. He had—he would tell her in confidence—been taking some lessons in elocution of (or, as he put it, "off") Mr Peter Benny.

"Did you ever hear tell of a man called Burke?" he asked.

"'Course I did," answered Mrs Bosenna, albeit the question startled her. "My old nurse told me about him often. He used to go about snatchin' bodies."

Cai considered a moment, and shook his head. "I don't think mine can be the same, or Benny wouldn't have recommended him so highly. There was another fellow that learned to be a speaker by practisin' with his mouth full of pebbles, which struck me as too thoroughgoin' altogether, and 'specially when you're aimin' no higher than a Parish

Council. To be sure," he confessed, "I did make a start with a brace of peppermint bull's-eyes, and pretty nigh choked myself. But Benny says that, for English public speakin', there's no such master as this Burke, and so I've sent for him."

"Gracious!" exclaimed Mrs Bosenna. "Won't he charge a terrible lot?—with travellin' expenses too!"

"His works, I mean. The man's dead, and they're in six volumes."

"You'll never get through 'em then, between this and Whitsuntide. If I was you, I'd keep on at the peppermints."

Although the six volumes of Edmund Burke duly arrived, and Cai made a bold attempt upon their opening tractate, "A Vindication of Natural Society,"—thereby hopelessly bemusing himself, since he accepted its ironical arguments with entire seriousness,—in the end he took a shorter way and procured Mr Benny to write his speeches for him.

These he got by heart in the course of long morning rambles; these he rehearsed with their accomplished author; these he declaimed in the solitude of his bed-chamber—until, one day, Mrs Bowldler (whom terror arresting, had held spellbound for some minutes on the landing) knocked in to know if Palmerston should run for the doctor.

By dint (or in spite) of them at the election of Parish Councillors Cai headed the poll with a total of 411 votes. 'Bias, who received 366, came fourth on the list of elected: but this was no disgrace—a triumph rather—for one who had omitted to be born in the town. By general consent the honours stood easy; though, on the strength of his poll, the new Council began by choosing Cai for its chairman. On him Troy laid thereby the chief responsibility for the Jubilee festivities now but two months ahead.

At this first Council meeting, and at the meetings of many committees subsequently called to make preparation for the great day, 'Bias said very little. Those—and they were many—who had looked for "ructions" between the two rivals, and had taken glee of the prospect, suffered complete disappointment.

"You see," he explained to Mr Rogers, "I don't hold by several things Cai Hocken and the Committee are doin'. But they be doin' 'em in the Queen's honour, after their lights: and 'tisn't fitty to use the occasion for quarrellin'. There's only one way o' forcin' a quarrel on me where Queen Victoria's consarned, and that is by speakin' ill of her."

"That's right," agreed Mr Rogers. "You've common ground in the Widow-woman."

"The ——?"

"The Widow at Windsor, as they call her."

"Oh! I thought for a moment——"

"There's widows and widows," Mr Rogers blinked mischievously. "But look here—what's this I'm told

about your interferin' down at the Harbour Road, tryin' to get the Commissioners to regylate the ladin' o' vessels?"

"Well, and why not?" asked 'Bias.

"Why not? For one thing you bet, it isn' the Commissioners' business."

"It ought to be somebody's business to stop what's goin' on. Say 'tis mine, if you like."

"Look 'ee here, Cap'n Hunken," said Mr Rogers, showing his teeth. "If that's your game, better fit you was kickin' up a rumpus on the Parish Council than puttin' a spoke into honest trade. I didn' make room 'pon the Board for you to behave in that style."

"I don't care whether you did or you didn'," retorted 'Bias sturdily. "And 'honest trade' d'ye call it? robbin' the underwriters and puttin' seamen's lives in danger."

"Eh? . . . *You're* a nice man to talk, I must say! Come to me, you do, and want me to get you anything up to twenty per cent without risk. How d'ee think that's done in these days, with every one cuttin' freights? I gave you credit for havin' more sense."

'Bias stared. "See here," he said slowly, "if I'd known that hundred pound was to be put into any such wickedness, I'd have seen you further before trustin' you with it. As 'tis, I'll trouble you——"

"Hold hard, there!" Mr Rogers interrupted. "You're in a tarnation hurry every way, 'twould seem. Who told you as I'd put that hundred into any vessel below Plimsoll mark?"

"I thought you hinted as much."

"Then you thought a long sight too fast. If you must know, you're money's in the old *Saltypool*, and old as she is, that steamship might be my child, the way I watch over her."

"The *Saltypool!* Why, she's the most scand'lous case as has gone out of harbour these three months!"

"Eh?"

"I saw her with my own eyes alongside No. 3 jetty the evenin' before she sailed. A calm night it was too; and she with her Plimsoll well under and a whole line o' trucks waitin' to be shot into her. She went out before daybreak, if you remember, and God knows how low she was by that time."

Mr Roger's jaw dropped.

"The idiots!" he muttered. "When I told 'em——" He broke off. "I say, you're not pullin' my leg?"

"Saw her with my own eyes, I tell you," 'Bias assured him, wondering a little; for the old sinner's dismay was clearly honest.

"Then all I say is, you can call Fancy and tell her to fetch me a Bible, if there's one in the house, an' I'll swear to you I never knew it, an' I never seen it. What's more, I'll sack the captain, an' I'll sack the mate. What's more, I'll cable dismissal out to Philadelphy. What's more——"

"There, there!" interposed 'Bias. "You didn' know, and

enough said! I don't want any man thrown out of employ. 'Tis the system I'm out to spoil."

"Skippers are a trouble-without-end in these days," Mr Rogers muttered on, staring gloomily at the fire in the grate; "specially to a man crippled like me. . . . You spend years sarchin' for a fool, an' you no sooner get the treasure, as you think — one you can trust for a plain ord'nary fool in all weathers —than he turns out a *dam* fool!"

On his way from the ship-chandler's 'Bias ran against Mr Philp, who paused in the roadway and eyed him, chewing a piece of news and chuckling.

"That friend o' yours is a wonner!" preluded Mr Philp.

"Meanin' Caius Hocken?"

"Who else? . . . He's goin' a great pace in these days; but you won't tell me he has flown out o' *that* range? Yes, 'tis Cap'n Hocken I mean; our Mayor, as you may call him; and there's some as looks to see a silver cradle yet in his mayoralty."

"What's the latest?" 'Bias could not help putting the question, yet despised himself for it.

"He's President of the Stevedores' Regatta this year."

"Get along with your news —I heard it ten days ago."

"So you did, for I told you myself. But he's giving a silver cup for the 14-foot race."

"And I heard that too."

"Ay: but what you don't know, maybe, is that he's been up to Rilla Farm tryin' to persuade Mrs Bosenna to attend on the Committee-ship an' hand the cup—his *cup*—to the winner."

"She's never consented?"

"Now I call that a masterstroke. That's the bold way to win a woman. 'Come along o' me, my dear, an' find yourself the lady patroness, life-size. . . . Madam, you'll excuse the liberty,—but may I have the igstreme honour to request you to take my arm in the full view of all this here assembled rabble?' So arm-in-arm it is, up the deck, and 'Ladies an' Gentlemen'—meanin' 'Attention, pray, all you scum o' the earth' — 'I'll trouble you to observe strick silence while this lady, with whom you are all familiar——'"

"Steady on!"

"Well, 'familiar' is too strong a word, as you say. 'While this lady, with whom you're all acquainted, presents the gallant winner with a cup, value Five Pounds, which you may have reckoned as an igstravagance when you heard I was the donor, but will now reckernise as a sprat to catch a whale—that is, unless you're even bigger fools than I take ye for. 'Twas with the greatest difficulty I indoooced Mrs Bosenna——'"

"She never would!" swore 'Bias.

"Well, as a matter o' fact, she hasn't. But you'll allow the trick was clever, and nothin' more left for the woman, if she'd yielded, but to be carried straight off to the altar.

'Twould have been expected of her, and no less."

"What has she done?"

"Taken a wise an' womanly course, as I hear. 'No,' says she, 'I'll go to bottomless brimstone before lendin' myself to such a dodge'—or words to that effect. 'But I'll tell 'ee what I will do,' says she, 'I'll offer this here silver cup on my own account, an' give it with my own hands to the winner. And you can stand by,' says she, 'an' look as pompous as you please.' Either that, or that in so many words. I'm givin' you the gist of it, as it reached me."

"Thank 'ee," said 'Bias, perpending and digging up the roadway with the point of his stick. "'Tis to be her own prize, you say?"

"Yes, an' presented with her own hands. If I was you—bein' a trifle late as you are on the handicap—I'd sail in an' collar that prize. 'Twould be a facer for him."

"No time."

"Whit-Monday's not till the seventh o' June. Four clear weeks: an' Boatbuilder Wyatt could knock you up a shell in half that time. He gets cleverer with every boat of the class; and with a boat built to race once only he could make pretty well sure."

Later that afternoon Mr Philp, who never lost an occasion to advertise himself, paid a call on Mr Wyatt, boatbuilder.

"I found a new customer for you this afternoon," he announced, winking mysteriously. "If Cap'n Hunken should call along you'll know what I mean."

On his homeward road the industrious man had a stroke of good luck. He espied Captain Hocken, and made haste to overtake him.

"Good evenin', Cap'n Cai!"

"Ah — Mr Philp? Good evenin' to 'ee."

"It's like a providence my meetin' you; for as it chances you was the last man in my mind. I happened down to Wyatt's yard just now, and—if you'll believe me — there's reason to believe he'll get an order to-morrow for another 14-footer."

"Ay? . . . What for?"

"Why, to enter for the cup you're givin' on Whit-Monday."

"You're mistaken," said Cai. "'Tis Mrs Bosenna that's givin' the cup, not I."

"What? With her own hands?"

"*To* be sure. Why not?"

"Then that accounts for it," said Mr Philp gleefully, rubbing his hands. "He's a deep one, is your friend Hunken! It did strike me as odd, too—his givin' an order to Wyatt in all this hurry: but now I understand."

"Drat the man! what *is* it you understand?"

"Why, as you know, Wyatt can knock him a shell together that'll win the race under everybody's nose. 'Tis a child's-play, if you don't mind castin' the boat next day an' content yourself with scantlin' like a packin' case. At least, 'twould be child's-play to any one but Wyatt, who can't help buildin'

solid, to save his life. If the man had consulted me, I'd have recommended Mitchell. Mitchell never had a length o' seasoned wood in his store: he can't afford the capital. But to my mind he can—take him as a workman—shape a boat better than Wyatt ever did yet."

"And to mine," Cai agreed.

"The cunning of it, too! He to take the prize from her under your nose and you standin' by and lookin' foolish. For, let alone the craft, they say Cap'n Hunken can handle a small boat to beat any man in this harbour. He cleared a whole prize-list out in Barbadoes, I've heard."

"What, 'Bias? Don't you be afraid. He can't steer a small boat for nuts."

"Dear me! Then I must have been misinformed, indeed."

"You have been," Cai assured him. "I reckon Mitchell can knock up a boat to give fits to anything of Wyatt's; and if 'Bias — if Cap'n Hunken is countin' on Wyatt to help him put the fool on me, it may happen he'll learn better."

CHAPTER XXIII.—PASSAGE REGATTA.

"'Tis good to wear a bit of colour again," said Mrs Bosenna on Regatta morning, as she stood before her glass pinning to her bodice a huge bow of red, white, and blue ribbons. "Black never did become me."

"It becomes ye well enough, mistress, and ye know it," contradicted Dinah.

"'Tis monotonous, anyway. I can't see why we poor widow-women should be condemned to wear it for life."

"*You* bain't," Dinah contradicted again, and added slily, "D'ye wish me to fetch witnesses?"

Her mistress, tittivating the ribbons, ignored the question. "I do think we might be allowed to wear colours now and again—say on Sundays. As it is, I daresay many will be pickin' holes in my character, even for this little outbreak."

"There's a notion, now! Why, 'tis Queen Victory's Year—and a pretty business if one widow mayn't pay her respects to another!"

"It do always seem strange to me," Mrs Bosenna mused.

"What?"

"Why, that the Queen should be a widow, same as any one else."

"Low fever," said Dinah. "And I've always heard as the Prince Consort had a delicate constitution."

"It happened before I was born," said Mrs Bosenna vaguely. "Think o' that, now! . . . And yet 'twasn't the widowin' I meant so much as the marryin'. I can't manage to connect it in my mind with folks so high up in the world as Kings and Queens. 'Tis so intimate."

"You may bet Providence tempers it to 'em somehow,"

opined Dinah. "If they didn' have families, what'd become o' English history?"

If any tongues wagged against Mrs Bosenna for wearing the patriotic colours that day, they were not heard in the holiday crowd at the Passage Slip when, with nicely calculated unpunctuality, she arrived, at 11.32 (the time appointed having been 11.15), to be conveyed on board the Committee vessel. (It should be explained here that the aquatic half of Troy's Passage Regatta is compressed within the forenoon: at midday Troy dines, and even on holidays observes Greenwich time for that event. Moreover, the afternoon sports of bicycle racing, steeplechasing, polo-bending, &c., were preluded in those days—before an electric-power station worked the haulage on the jetties—by a procession of huge horses, highly groomed and bedecked with ribbons: and this procession, starting at 1 P.M., allowed the avid holiday-keeper small margin for dallying over his meal.)

Mrs Bosenna reached the slip to find Cai waiting below in a four-oared boat which he had borrowed from the Clerk of the Course. A large red ensign drooped from a staff and trailed in the water astern: the crew wore scarlet stocking-caps: bright cushions disposed in the stern-sheet added a touch of luxury to this pomp and circumstance. It might not rival the barge of Cleopatra upon Cydnus; but the shore-crowd, under whose eyes it had been waiting for close upon twenty minutes, voted it to be a very creditable turn-out; and Cai, watch in hand, was at least as impatient as Mark Antony. Off the Committee Ship, a cable's length up the river, the penultimate race (ran-dan pulling-boats) was finishing amid banging of guns and bursts of music from the "Troy Town Band," saluting the winner with "See the Conquering Hero Comes," the second boat with strains consecrated to first and second prize-winners in Troy Harbour since days beyond the span of living memory, even as all races start to the less classical but none the less immemorial air of "Off She goes to Wallop the Cat."

The crowd parted and made passage for Mrs Bosenna to descend the slip-way: for Troy is always polite. Its politeness, however, seldom takes the form of reticence; and as she descended she drew a double broadside of neighbourly good-days and congratulations, with audible comments from the back rows on her personal appearance.

"Mornin', Mrs Bosenna—an' a brave breast-knot you're wearin'!"

"Han'some, id'n-a?"

"Handsome, sure 'nough!"

"Fresh coloured as the day she was wed. . . . Good mornin', ma'am! Good mornin', Mrs Bosenna—an' a proper Queen of Sheba you be, all glorious within."

"What a thing 'tis to have money!" remarked a meditative voice deep in the throng.

"Eh, Billy, my son, it cures half the ills o' life," responded another.

"'Tis a mysterious thing," hazarded a woman—"a dispensation you may call it, how black suits some complexions while others can't look at it."

"An' 'tis your sex's perversity," spoke up a male, "that them it don't suit be apt to wear it longest"—whereat several laughed, for where everybody is good-humoured the feeblest witticism will pass.

Mrs Bosenna heard these comments, but acknowledged them only by a scarcely perceptible heightening of colour. She went down the slip-way royally, with Dinah in close attendance: and Cai, catching sight of her and pocketing his watch, snatched up a boat-hook to draw the boat's quarter alongside the slip, while with his disengaged hand he lifted the brim of a new and glossy top-hat.

"Am I disgracefully late?" Without waiting for his answer, as he handed her aboard she exclaimed, "Oh! and what a crowd of boats! . . . I never felt so nervous in all my life."

"There's no need," said Cai—who himself, two minutes before, had been desperately nervous. He seated himself beside her and took the tiller. "Push her out, port-oars! Ready?—Give way, all! . . . There's no need," he assured her, sinking his voice; "I never saw ye look a properer sight. Maybe 'tis the bunch o' ribbon sets 'ee off — 'Tis the first time ye've worn colour to my recollection."

"Dead black never suited me."

"I wouldn' say that. . . . But," added Cai, upon a happy thought, "if that's so, you know where to find excuse to leave off wearin' it."

"Hush!" she commanded. "How can you talk so with all these hundreds of eyes upon us?"

"I don't care." Cai's voice rose recklessly.

"Oh, hush! or the crew'll hear us."

"I don't care, I tell you."

"But I do — I care very much. . . . You don't pay me compliments when we're alone," she protested, changing the subject slightly.

"I mean 'em all the time."

"Well, since compliments are flyin' to-day, that's a fine new hat you're wearin'. And I like the badge in your buttonhole: red with gold letters—it gives ye quite a smart appearance. What's the writin' on it?"

"'President.' 'Tis the only red-and-gold badge in the show. Smart? I tell 'ee I'm feelin' smart."

It was indeed Cai's day—his hour, rather—of triumph. He had played a winning stroke, boldly, under the public eye: and a hundred comments of the sightseers, as he steered through the press of boats to the Committee Ship, testified to his success. Though he could not hear, he felt them.

—"Well!"

—"Proper cuttin'-out ex-

pedition, as you might call it."

—"And she with a great bunch o' ribbons pinned on her, that no-one shan't miss the meanin' of it."

—"Well, I always favoured Cap'n Hocken's chance, for my part. An', come to think of it, 'tis more fitty 't should happen so. When all's said an' done, t'other's a foreigner, as you might say, from the far side o' the Duchy: an' if old Bosenna's money is to go anywhere, why then, bein' Troy-earned, let it go to a Troy man."

—"But 'tis a facer for Cap'n Hunken, all the same. Poor chap, look at 'en."

—"Where? . . . I don't see' en."

—"Why, forward there, on the Committee Ship: leanin' up against the bulwarks an' lookin' as if he'd swallowed a dog."

—"There, there! . . . And some plucky of the man to stand up to it, 'stead of walkin' off an' drownin' hisself. I like a man as can take a knock-down blow standing up. 'Tis a rare occurrence in these days."

Mrs Bosenna, too, whose wealth (pleasant enough, for the comforts it procured, pleasanter, perhaps, for an attendant sense of security, pleasantest of all, it may be, for a further sense of power and importance, secretly enjoyed) had, as yet, of public acknowledgment taken little toll beyond the deference of tradesmen when she went shopping, felt herself of a sudden caught up to an eminence the very giddiness of which was ecstacy. It is possible that, had Cai claimed her there and then, before the crowd, she would have yielded with but a faint protest. You must not think that she lost her head for a moment. On the contrary, during her triumphal convoy she saw everything with remarkable distinctness. She knew well enough that some scores of women, all around, were envying her, yet admiring in spite of their envy. Without hearing them, she could almost tell what comments were uttered in boat after boat as she passed. But what mattered their envy, so long as they admired? Nay, what mattered their envy, so long as they envied? The tonic north wind, the sunshine, the sparkle of the water, the gay lines of bunting flickering from stem to stern of the Committee Ship, the invigorating blare of the Troy Town Band, now throwing its soul into "Champagne Charlie," the propulsion of the oars that seemed to snatch her and sweep her forward past wondering faces to high destiny, — all these were wings, and lifted her spirit with them. She began to understand what it must feel like to be a Queen, or (at least) a Prime Minister's wife.

"Ea-sy all! In oars! . . . Bow, stand by to check her!"

Cai called his orders clearly, sharply, in the tone of a master of men. A score of

boats hampered approach to the accommodation ladder; but those that had occupants were obediently thrust wide to make way, and easily as in a barge of state Mrs Bosenna was brought alongside. A dozen hands checked the way of the boat, now abruptly. Other hands were stretched to help her up the ladder, which she ascended with smiling and graceful agility. On the deck, at the head of it, stood the Hon. Secretary, with the silver cup ready, nursed in the crook of his arm. It was a handsome cup, and it flashed in the sunlight. The Hon. Secretary doffed his yachting cap. A dozen men close behind him doffed their caps at the signal. They were the successful competitors of the dinghy race, mixed up with committee-men: they had come to receive their prizes. The competing boats, their sails lowered, had been brought alongside, and lay tethered, trailing off from the ship's quarter, rubbing shoulders in a huddle.

Cai, mounting to the deck close behind Dinah, who had followed her mistress, was met by the Hon. Secretary with the announcement that everything had been ready these ten minutes.

Almost before she could catch her breath, Mrs Bosenna found the cup thrust into her hands; the band in the fore part of the vessel ceased—or, to speak more accurately, smothered—"Champagne Charlie"; the group before her fell back to form a semicircle and urged forward the abashed first prize-winner, who stood rubbing one ankle against another and awkwardly touching his forelock, while a silence fell, broken only by voices from the boats around calling "Order! Or-der for the speech!"

Mrs Bosenna, recognising the champion in spite of his blushes, collected her courage, smiled, and said—

"Why, 'tis Walter Sobey!"

"Servant, ma'am!" Mr Sobey touched his forelock again and grinned, as who should add, "You and me, ma'am, meets in strange places."

"Well, I never! . . . How things do turn out!" It crossed Mrs Bosenna's mind that on the last occasion of her addressing a word to Walter Sobey he had been employed by her to cart manure for her roses: and across this recollection floated a sense of money wasted—for to what service could Walter Sobey, inhabitant of a three-roomed cottage, put a two-handled loving-cup embossed in silver?

There was no time, however, for hesitation. . . . With the most gracious of smiles she took the cup in both hands, and presented it to the champion.

"'Tis good, anyhow, to feel it goes to a neighbour: and —and if the worst comes to the worst, Walter, you can always take it back to the shop and change it for something useful."

"Thank'ee, ma'am," said Mr Sobey, taking the cup respectfully. He backed a pace or

two, gazed around, and caught the eye of the Hon. Secretary. "There's a money prize, too, attached to it—ain't there?" he was heard to ask. "Leastways, 'twas so said 'pon the bills." Mr Sobey was proud of his victory; the prouder because he had built the winning boat with his own hands. (Very luckily for him, at the last moment Captain Hocken had judged it beneath the dignity of a Regatta President to compete; and Captain Hunken, missing his rival at the starting-line, had likewise withdrawn from the contest.)

"Certainly," agreed the Hon. Secretary. "Two guineas. Hi, there, aft! Where's Mr Willett?"

Other voices carried back the call, and presently the Treasurer, Mr Willett—a pursey little man with enormous side-whiskers—came hurrying forward from the after-companion, where he had been engaged in hearing a protest from an excited disputant—a competitor in the 16-foot class—who had in fact come in last, even on his handicap, but with a clear notion in his own mind, and an array of arguments to convince others, that he was entitled to the prize. Such misunderstandings were frequent enough at Passage Regatta, and mainly because Mr Willett, whom nobody cared to cashier—he had been Treasurer for so many years—had as a rule imbibed so much beer in the course of the forenoon that any one argument appeared to him as cogent as any other. He seemed, in fact, to delight in hearing a case from every point of view; and by consequence it could be securely predicted of any given race in Passage Regatta that "You had never lost till you'd won."

Now, on Cai's secret recommendation the Committee had engaged the boy Palmerston—who was quick at sums—to stand by Mr Willett during the forenoon and count out the cash for him. The Treasurer (it was argued) would be suspicious of help from a grown man; whereas he could order a boy about, and even cuff his head on emergency. So Palmerston, seated by the after-companion, had spent a great part of the morning in listening to disputes, and counting out money as soon as the disputes were settled. Nor was objection taken—as it might have been at more genteel fixtures—to a part of the prize being produced from Palmerston's mouth, in which he had a knack of storing petty cash, for convenience of access—and for safety too, to-day, since he had discovered a hole in one of his pockets.

Mr Willett then, rising and cutting short an altercation between two late competitors in the 16-foot race, came hurrying forward with Palmerston, ever loyal, in his wake. For the boy, without blaming any one, anxious only to fulfil a responsibility that weighed on him, was aware that Mr Willett—whether considered as a man or as a treasurer—had taken in overmuch beer, and might need support in either capacity or in both.

But while Mr Willett advanced, in a series of hasty plunges,—as though the Committee vessel were ploughing the deep with all sail set,—voices around Mrs Bosenna had already begun to call for a speech; and the cry was quickly taken up from the many boats overside, now gathered in a close throng.

"A speech! a speech!"

Mrs Bosenna laughed, and turned about prettily.

"I did not bargain for any speech," she protested. "I—in fact I never made a speech in my life. If—if Captain Hocken would say a few words——"

"Ay, Cap'n," exhorted a voice, "speak up for her, like a man now! Seems to us she've given you the right."

There was a general laugh, and it brought a heightened flush to Mrs Bosenna's cheek. Cai, not noting it, cleared his throat and doffed his tall hat. "Here, hold this," said he, catching sight of Palmerston, and cleared his throat again.

"Friends and naybours," said he, and this opening evoked loud applause. As it died down, he continued, "Friends and naybours, this here has been a most successful regatta. *Of* which, as a fitting conclusion, the Brave has received his reward at the hands of the Fair."

"Lord! he means hisself!" interrupted a giggling voice from one of the boats.

This interruption called forth a storm of applause. Oars were rattled on rowlocks and feet began stamping on bottom boards.

"By the Brave," continued Cai, pitching his voice higher, "I mean, of course, our respected fellow-citizen, Mr Walter Sobey, whose handling of his frail craft——"

("Hear! Hear!")

"—Whose handling of his frail craft to-day was of a natur' to surprise and delight all beholders."

At this point Mr Willett, the Treasurer, who had for some seconds been staring at the speaker with a glazed uncertain eye, interrupted in a voice thick with liquor—

"The question is, Who wants me?"

"Nobody, you d—d old fool!" snapped the Hon. Secretary. "Can't you see Cap'n Hocken is makin' a speech?"

"*I* see," answered Mr Willett with drunken deliberation, "and, what's more, I don't think much of it. . . . Gentlemen over there 'pears t' agree with me," he added: for from the rear of the group a scornful laugh had endorsed his criticism.

"Any one can tell what *hasn't* agreed with you this mornin'," retorted the Hon. Secretary, still more angrily. "Go home, and——"

But Cai had lifted a hand. "No quarrelling, please!" he commanded, and resumed, "As I was sayin', ladies and gentlemen—or as I was about to say—the handlin' of a small boat demands certain gifts or, er, qualities; and these gifts and, er, qualities bein' the gifts and, h'm, qualities what made Eng-

land such as we see her to-day, —a sea-farin' nation an' foremost at that,—it follows that we cannot despise them if we wish her to occupy the same position in the futur'—which to my mind is education in a nutshell."

Again the scornful laugh echoed from the back of the crowd, and this time Cai knew the voice. It stung him the more sharply, as in a flash he recollected that the phrase "education in a nutshell" belonged properly to a later paragraph, and in his flurry he had dragged it in prematurely. His audience applauded, but Cai swung about in wrath.

"My remarks," said he, "don't seem to commend themselves to one o' my hearers. But I'm talkin' now on a subjec' about which I know som'at — not about *ploughin'*."

The thrust was admirably delivered: the more adroitly in that, on the edge of delivering it, he had paused with a self-depreciatory smile. Its point was taken up on the instant. The audience on deck sent up a roar of laughter, and the roar spread and travelled away from the ship in a widening circle as from boat to boat the shrewd hit was reported. Distant explosions of mirth were still greeting it, when Cai, finding voice again, and wisely cutting out his prepared peroration, concluded as follows:—

"Any way, friends and naybours, I can wind up with something as'll commend itself to everybody: and that is by wishing success to Passage Regatta, and askin' ye to give three cheers for Mrs Bosenna. Hip—hip——"

"Hoo-ray! hoo-ray! hoo-ray!" The cheers were given with a will and passed down the river in rolling echoes. But before the last echo died away —while Mrs Bosenna smiled her acknowledgment — as the band formed up for "God Save the Queen" — as they lifted their instruments and the bandmaster tapped the music-stand with his baton,—at the top of his voice 'Bias delivered his counter-stroke.

"And one more for Peter Benny!"

There was a momentary hush, and then — for Troy's sense of humour is impartial, and every one knew from what source Captain Hocken derived his public eloquence—the air was rent with shout upon shout of merriment. Even the band caught the contagion. The drummer drew a long applausive rattle from his side-drum; the trombone player sawing the air with his instrument, as if with a fret-saw, evoked noises not to be described.

In the midst of this general mirth — while Cai stood his ground, red to the ears, and Mrs Bosenna plucked nervously at the tassel of her sunshade— 'Bias came thrusting forward, shouldering his way through the press. But 'Bias's face reflected none of the mirth he had awakened.

"I mayn't know much about ploughin', Cai Hocken——" he began.

"Ah? Good day, Captain

Hunken!" interposed Mrs Bosenna.

"Good-day to you, ma'am." He raised his hat without answering her smile. Then, with a gesture that dismissed the tactful interruption, "I mayn't know much about ploughin', though it sticks in my mind that as between us the judges handed me the stakes, even at *that*. But at handlin' a boat—one o' these here dingheys if you will, an' if you care to make good your words——"

"What *was* my words?"

"Oh, I beg pardon." 'Bias corrected himself with a snort of contempt. "'Peter Benny's words,' maybe I should have said: but 'education in a nutshell' was the expression."

"I'll take you up—when and where you please, and for any money," Cai challenged, white to the lips and shaking with rage.

"A five-pound note, if you will."

"As you please. . . . I haven't five pound here, upon me."

"Nor I, as it happens. But here's a sovereign for earnest."

"Here's another to cover it, anyway. Who'll hold the stakes? . . . Will you, ma'am?" Cai appealed to Mrs Bosenna.

"Certainly not," she answered, tapping the deck angrily with the ferrule of her sunshade. "And I wonder how you two can behave so foolish before folks."

But for the moment they were past her control.

"Here . . . Pam! Pam will do, eh?"

"Well as another."

"Right. Here, Pam, take hold o' this sovereign and keep it careful!"

"Mine too. . . . That makes the wager, eh?"

"For five pounds?"

"Five pounds. Right."

"Boats?"

"I don't care. Our own two, or draw lots for any two here, as you please."

"But — gentlemen!" interposed the Hon. Secretary.

"Now, don't you start interferin'"—'Bias turned on him sullenly. "Else you might chance to get what you don't like."

"Oh, they're mad!" wailed Mrs Bosenna, and Dinah was heard to murmur, "You've pushed 'em too far, mistress: an' don't say as I didn' warn you!"

"I—I was only goin' to suggest, gentlemen," urged the Hon. Secretary, "it bein' already ten minutes past noon, and everybody waitin' for 'God Save the Queen.'"

"Hullo!" hailed a voice alongside, at the foot of the accommodation table; and Mr Philp's top hat, Mr Philp's deceptively jovial face, Mr Philp's body clad in mourning weeds, climbed successively into view. "There, naybours!" he announced. "I'm in the nick of time, after all, it seems,—though when I heard the church clock strike twelve it sent my heart into my mouth." He stood and panted.

"Ah! good-day, Mr Philp!" Mrs Bosenna turned, hailing

his intervention, and advanced to shake hands.

"Good-day to you, ma'am. Been enjoyin' yourself, I hope?" said Mr Philp, somewhat taken aback by the warmth of her greeting.

"A most successful Regatta . . . don't you agree?"

"I might, ma'am," answered Mr Philp solemnly. "I don't doubt it, ma'am. But as a matter of fact I have just come from a funeral."

"Oh! . . . I—I beg your pardon—I didn't know——"

"There's no call to apologise, ma'am. . . . The deceased was not a relative. A farm-servant, ma'am—female—at the far end of the parish: Tuckworthy's farm, to be precise: and the woman, Sarah Jane Collins by name. Probably you didn't know her. No more did I except by sight: but a very respectable woman—a case of Bright's disease. In the midst of life we are in death, and, much as I enjoy Passage Regatta——"

"You have missed it then?"

"The woman had saved money, ma'am. There was a walled grave by request." Mr Philp sighed over this remembered consolation. "She could not help it clashin', poor soul."

"No, indeed!"

"And you may or may not have noticed it, ma'am, but when a man sets duty before pleasure, often as not he gets rewarded. Comin' back along the town before the streets filled, I picked up a piece o' news, and hurried along with it. I reckoned it might be of interest if I could reach here ahead of 'God Save the Queen.'"

"Gracious! What has happened?" Mrs Bosenna clasped her hands. Indeed, Mr Philp, big with his news and important, had somehow contrived to overawe everyone on deck.

"The news is," he announced slowly, "that the *Saltypool* has gone down, within fifty miles of Philadelphia. Crew saved in the boats. Cable reached Mr Rogers at eleven o'clock, and"—he paused impressively, "there and then Rogers had a second stroke. Point o' death, they say."

Above the sympathetic murmur of Mr Philp's audience there broke, on the instant, a gasping cry—followed by a yet more terrible sound, as of one in the last agony of strangulation.

All turned, as Palmerston—dashing forward between the music-stands of the band and scattering them to right and left—flung himself between Cai and 'Bias at their very feet.

"Masters—masters! I've a-swallowed the stakes!"

(*To be concluded.*)

TALES OF THE MERMAID TAVERN.

BY ALFRED NOYES.

VII. *FLOS MERCATORUM.*

PART II.

"O, MELLOW be thy malmsey," grunted Ben,
Filling the Clerk another cup.
"The peal,"
Quoth Clopton, "is not ended, but the pause
In ringing, chimes to a deep inward ear
And tells its own deep tale. Silence and sound,
Darkness and light, mourning and mirth,—no tale,
No painting, and no music, nay, no world,
If God should cut their fruitful marriage-knot.
A shallow sort to-day would fain deny
A hell, sirs, to this boundless universe.
To such I say 'no hell, no Paradise!'
Others would fain deny the topless towers
Of heaven, and make this earth a hell indeed.
To such I say, 'the unplumbed gulfs of grief
Are only theirs for whom the blissful chimes
Ring from those unseen heights.' This earth, mid-way,
Hangs like a belfry where the ringers grasp
Their ropes in darkness, each in his own place,
Each knowing, by the tune in his own heart,
Never by sight, when he must toss through heaven
The tone of his own bell. Those bounded souls
Have never heard our chimes! Why, sirs, myself
Simply by running up and down the scale
Descend to hell or soar to heaven. My bells
Height above height, deep below deep, respond!
Their scale is infinite. Dare I, for one breath,
Dream that one note hath crowned and ended all,
Sudden I hear, far, far above those clouds,
Like laughing angels, peal on golden peal,
Innumerable as drops of April rain,
Yet every note distinct, round as a pearl,
And perfect in its place, a chime of law,
Whose pure and boundless mere arithmetic
Climbs with my soul to God."
Ben looked at him,
Gently. "Resume, old moralist," he said.
"On to thy marriage-bells!"
"The fairy-tales
Are wiser than they know, sirs. All our woes
Lead on to those celestial marriage-bells.
The world's a-wooing; and the pure City of God
Peals for the wedding of our joy and pain!

This was well seen of Richard Whittington;
For only he that finds the London streets
Paved with red flints, at last shall find them paved
Like to the Perfect City, with pure gold.
Ye know the world! what was a London waif
To Hugh Fitzwarren's daughter? He was fed
And harboured; and the cook declared she lacked
A scullion. So, in Hugh Fitzwarren's house,
He turned the jack, and scoured the dripping-pan.
How could he hope for more?
This Marchaunt's house
Was builded like a great high-gabled inn,
Square, with a galleried courtyard, such as now
The players use. Its rooms were rich and dim
With deep-set coloured panes and massy beams.
Its ancient eaves jutted o'er Red Rose Lane
Like the dark eyebrows of a mage asleep.
Its oaken stair coiled upward through a dusk
Heavy with fume of scented woods that burned
To keep the Plague away,—a gloom to embalm
A Pharaoh, but to dull the cheek and eye
Of country lads like Whittington.
He pined
For wind and sunlight. Yet he plied his task
Patient as in old tales of Elfin-land
The young knight would unhelm his golden locks
And play the scullion, so that he might watch
His lady's eyes unknown, and oftener hear
Her brook-like laughter rippling overhead;
Her green gown, like the breath of Eden boughs,
Rustling nigh him. And all day long he found
Sunshine enough in this. But when at night
He crept into the low dark vaulted den,
The cobwebbed cellar, where the cook had strewn
The scullion's bed of straw (and none too thick
Lest he should sleep too long), he choked for breath;
And, like an old man hoarding up his life,
Fostered his glimmering rushlight as he sate
Bolt upright, while a horrible scurry heaved
His rustling bed, and bright black-beaded eyes
Peered at him from the crannies of the wall.
Then darkness whelmed him, and perchance he slept,—
Only to fight with night-mares, and to fly
Down endless tunnels in a ghastly dream,
Hunted by horrible human souls that took
The shape of monstrous rats, great chattering snouts,
Vile shapes of shadowy cunning and grey greed,
That gnaw through beams, and undermine tall towns,
And carry the seeds of plague and ruin and death
Under the careless homes of sleeping men.
Thus, in the darkness, did he wage a war
With all the powers of darkness. 'If the light
Do break upon me, by the grace of God,'
So did he vow, 'O, then will I remember,

Then, then, will I remember, ay, and help
To build that lovelier City which is paved
For rich and poor alike, with purest gold.'

Ah, sirs, he kept his vow. Ye will not smile
If, at the first, the best that he could do
Was with his first poor penny-piece to buy
A cat, and bring her home, under his coat
By stealth (or else that termagant, the cook,
Had drowned it in the water-butt, nor deemed
The water worse to drink). So did he quell
First his own plague, but bettered all the house.
Now, in those days, Marchaunt Adventurers
Shared with their prentices the happy chance
Of each new venture. Each might have his stake,
Little or great, upon the glowing tides
Of high romance that washed the wharfs of Thames;
And every lad in London had his groat
Or splendid shilling on some fair ship at sea.

So, on an April eve, Fitzwarren called
His prentices together; for, ere long,
The *Unicorn*, his tall new ship, must sail
Beyond the world to gather gorgeous webs
From Eastern looms, great miracles of silk
Dipt in the dawn by wizard hands of Ind;
Or, if they chanced upon that fabled coast
Where Sydon, river of jewels, like a snake
Slides down the gorge its coils of crimson fire,
Perchance a richer cargo,—rubies, pearls,
Or gold bars from the Gates of Paradise.
And many a moon, at least, a faërie foam
Would lap Blackfriars wharf, where London lads
Gazed in the sunset down that misty reach
For old black battered hulks and tattered sails
Bringing their dreams home from the uncharted sea.

And one flung down a groat—he had no more.
One staked a shilling, one a good French crown;
And one an angel, O, light-winged enough
To reach Cathay; and not a lad but bought
His pennyworth of wonder.
So they thought,
Till all at once Fitzwarren's daughter cried
'Father, you have forgot poor Whittington!'
''Snails,' laughed the rosy marchaunt, 'but that's true!
Fetch Whittington! The lad must stake his groat!
'Twill bring us luck!'
'Whittington! Whittington!'
Down the dark stair, like a gold-headed bird,
Fluttered sweet Alice. 'Whittington! Richard! Quick!
Quick with your groat now for the *Unicorn!*'

'A groat!' cried Whittington, standing there aghast,

With brown bare arms, still coloured by the sun,
Among his pots and pans. 'Where should I find
A groat? I staked my last groat in a cat!'
—'What! Have you nothing? Nothing but a cat?
Then stake the cat,' she said; and the quick fire
That in a woman's mind out-runs the thought
Of man, lit her grey eyes.
Whittington laughed
And opened the cellar-door. Out sailed his wealth,
Waving its tail, purring, and rubbing its head
Now on his boots, now on the dainty shoe
Of Alice, who straightway, deaf to his laughing prayers,
Caught up the cat, whispered it, hugged it close,
Against its grey fur leaned her glowing cheek,
And carried it off in triumph.
Red Rose Lane
Echoed with laughter as with amber eyes
Blinking, the grey cat in a seaman's arms
Went to the wharf. 'Ay, but we need a cat,'
The captain said. So, when the painted ship
Sailed through a golden sunrise down the Thames,
A grey tail waved upon the misty poop,
And Whittington had his venture on the seas.

It was a nine days' jest, and soon forgot.
But, all that year,—ah, sirs, ye know the world
For all the foolish boasting of the proud
Looks not beneath the coat of Taunton serge
For Gules and Azure. A prince that comes in rags
To clean your shoes and, out of his own pride,
Waits for the world to paint his shield again
Must wait for ever and a day.
The world
Is a great hypocrite, hypocrite most of all
When thus it boasts its purple pride of race,
Then with eyes blind to all but pride of place
Tramples the scullion's heraldry underfoot,
Nay, never sees it, never dreams of it,
Content to know that, here and now, his coat
Is greasy . . .
So did Whittington find at last
Such nearness was most distant; that to see her,
Talk with her, serve her thus, was but to lose
True sight, true hearing. He must save his life
By losing it: forsake, to win, his love;
Go out into the world to bring her home.
It was but labour lost to clean the shoes,
And turn the jack, and scour the dripping-pan.
For every scolding blown about her ears
The cook's great ladle fell upon the head
Of Whittington; who, beneath her rule, became
The scullery's general scapegoat. It was he
That burned the pie-crust, drank the hippocras,
Dinted the silver beaker. . . .
Many a month

He chafed, till his resolve took sudden shape
And, out of the dark house at the peep of day,
Shouldering bundle and stick again, he stole
To seek his freedom, and to shake the dust
Of London from his shoes. . . .
You know the stone
On Highgate, where he sate awhile to rest,
With aching heart, and thought 'I shall not see
Her face again.' There, as the coloured dawn
Over the sleeping City slowly bloomed,
A small black battered ship with tattered sails
Blurring the burnished glamour of the Thames
Crept, side-long, to a wharf.
Then, all at once,
The London bells rang out a welcome home;
And, over them all, tossing the tenor on high,
The Bell of Bow, a sun among the stars,
Flooded the morning air with this refrain:—

'Turn again, Whittington! Turn again, Whittington!
Flos Mercatorum, thy ship hath come home!
Trailing from her cross-trees the crimson of the sunrise,
Dragging all the glory of the sunset thro' the foam.
Turn again, Whittington!
Turn again, Whittington,
Lord Mayor of London!

Turn again, Whittington! When thy hope was darkest,
Far beyond the sky-line a ship sailed for thee;
Flos Mercatorum, O, when thy faith was blindest,
Even then thy sails were set beyond the Ocean-sea.'

So he heard and heeded us, and turned again to London,
Stick and bundle on his back, he turned to *Red Rose Lane*,
Hardly hearing as he went the chatter of the prentices,—
What d'ye lack, and what d'ye lack, and what d'ye lack again?

Back into the scullery, before the cook had missed him,
Early in the morning his labours he began:
Once again to clean the shoes and clatter with the water-pail,
Once again to scrub the jack and scour the dripping-pan.

All the bells of London were pealing as he laboured;
Wildly beat his heart, and his blood began to race;
Then—there came a light step and, suddenly, beside him
Stood his lady Alice, with a light upon her face.

'Quick,' she said, 'O, quick,' she said, 'they want you, Richard Whittington!'
'Quick,' she said; and, while she spoke, her lighted eyes betrayed
All that she had hidden long, and all she still would hide from him.
So—he turned and followed her, his green-gowned maid.

. . . . . .

There, in a broad dark oaken-panelled room
Rich with black carvings and great gleaming cups
Of silver, sirs, and massy halpace built
Half over *Red Rose Lane*, Fitzwarren sat;
And, at his side, O, like an old romance
That suddenly comes true and fills the world
With April colours, two bronzed seamen stood,
Tattered and scarred, and stained with sun and brine.
'*Flos Mercatorum*,' Hugh Fitzwarren cried,
Holding both hands out to the pale-faced boy,
'The prentice wins the prize! Why, Whittington,
Thy cat hath caught the biggest mouse of all!'
And, on to the table, tilting a heavy sack,
One of the seamen poured a glittering stream
Of rubies, emeralds, opals, amethysts,
That turned the room to an Aladdin's cave,
Or magic goblet brimmed with dusky wine
Where clustering rainbow-coloured bubbles clung
And sparkled, in the halls of Prester John.

'And that,' said Hugh Fitzwarren, 'is the price
Paid for your cat in Barbary, by a king
Whose house was rich in gems, but sorely plagued
With rats and mice. Gather it up, my lad,
And praise your master for his honesty;
For, though my cargo prospered, yours out-shines
The best of it. Take it, my lad, and go;
You're a rich man; and, if you use it well,
Riches will make you richer, and the world
Will prosper in your own prosperity.
The miser, like the cold and barren moon,
Shines with a fruitless light. The spendthrift fool
Flits like a Jack-o-Lent o'er quags and fens;
But he that's wisely rich gathers his gold
Into a fruitful and unwasting sun
That spends its glory on a thousand fields
And blesses all the world. Take it and go.'

Blankly, as in a dream, Whittington stared.
'How should I take it, sir? The ship was yours,
And . . .'
'Ay, the ship was mine; but in that ship
Your stake was richer than we knew. 'Tis yours.'
'Then,' answered Whittington, 'if this wealth be mine,
Who but an hour ago was all so poor,
I know one way to make me richer still.'
He gathered up the glittering sack of gems,
Turned to the halpace, where his green-gowned maid
Stood in the glory of the coloured panes.
He thrust the splendid load into her arms,
Muttering—'Take it, lady! Let me be poor!
But rich, at least, in that you not despise
The waif you saved.'
—'Despise you, Whittington?'—

'O, no, not in the sight of God! But I
Grow tired of waiting for the Judgment Day!
I am but a man. I am a scullion now;
But I would like, only for half an hour,
To stand upright and say "I am a king!"
Take it!'
And, as they stood, a little apart,
Their eyes were married in one swift level look,
Silent, but all that souls could say was said.

. . . . . .

And
'I know a way,' said the Bell of St Martin's.
'Tell it, and be quick,' laughed the prentices below!
'Whittington shall marry her, marry her, marry her!
Peal for a wedding,' said the big Bell of Bow.

Ay, for he must take his wealth, and cast it on the sea again;
He shall have his caravels to traffic for him now;
He shall see his royal sails rolling up from Araby,
And the crest—a honey-bee—golden at the prow.

Whittington! Whittington! The world is all a fairy tale!—
Even so we sang for him.—But O, the tale is true!
Whittington he married her, and on his merry marriage-day,
O, we sang, we sang for him, like lavrocks in the blue.

Far away from London, these happy prentice lovers
Wandered through the summer to his western home again,
Down by deep Dorset to the wooded isle of Purbeck,
Round to little Kimmeridge, by many a lover's lane.

There did they abide as in a dove-cote hidden
Deep in happy woods until the bells of duty rang;
Then they rode the way he went, a barefoot boy to London,
Round by Hampshire forest-roads, but as they rode he sang:—

Kimmeridge in Dorset is the happiest of places!
All the little homesteads are thatched with beauty there!
All the old ploughmen, there, have happy smiling faces,
Christmas roses in their cheeks, and crowns of silver hair.

Blue as are the eggs in the nest of the hedge-sparrow,
Gleam the little rooms in the homestead that I know:
Death, I think, has lost the way to Kimmeridge in Dorset;
Sorrow never knew it, or forgot it, long ago!

Kimmeridge in Dorset, Kimmeridge in Dorset,
Though I may not see you more thro' all the years to be,
Yet will I remember the little happy homestead
Hidden in that Paradise where God was good to me.

. . . . . .

So they turned to London, and with mind and soul he laboured,
Flos Mercatorum, for the mighty years to be,
Fashioning, for profit—to the years that should forget him!—
This, our sacred City that must shine upon the sea.

Flos Mercatorum! Can a good thing come of Nazareth?
Ay! Above the darkness, where our duller senses drown,
Lifts the splendid Vision of a City, built on merchandize,
Fairer than that City of Light that wore the violet crown,

Lifts the sacred vision of a far-resplendent City,
Flashing, like the heart of heaven, its messages afar,
Trafficking, as God Himself, through all His interchanging worlds,
Holding up the scales of law, weighing star by star,

Stern as Justice, in one hand the sword of Truth and Righteousness;
Blind as Justice, in one hand the everlasting scales,
Lifts the sacred Vision of that City from the darkness,
Whence the thoughts of men break out, like blossoms, or like sails!

Ordered and harmonious, a City built to music,
Lifting, out of chaos, the shining towers of law,—
Ay, a sacred City, and a City built of merchandize,
Flos Mercatorum, was the City that he saw."

(*To be concluded.*)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

SHAKESPEARE'S "BAD PLAYS"—"THE WINTER'S TALE"—MR GRANVILLE BARKER'S PRESENTATION—THE POST-IMPRESSIONISTS—M. PICASSO AND HIS WAISTCOAT-BUTTON—M. BRAQUE'S BOX OF BRICKS—THE NAÏVETÉ OF M. MATISSE—'THE EPISODES OF VATHEK'—WHAT WAS THEIR ORIGIN?—THE 'LETTERS OF GEORGE MEREDITH.'

WHEN "King Lear" was presented some years ago with excellent art at the Haymarket Theatre, the critics objected that it was a bad play. The fable did not satisfy their sense of dramatic reality. It was contrary to their experience that an old gentleman should make division of his goods before death laid a compelling hand upon him. The conduct of Cordelia wholly baffled them. It is not thus that young ladies behave themselves in the neighbourhood of Lancaster Gate, and Cordelia received, instead of sympathy, the reproach which is always due to rash unworldliness. "The Winter's Tale," lately produced by Mr Granville Barker at the Savoy Theatre, has been assailed in a like spirit of irrelevance. It also is a bad play, we are told on every hand, and when we seek the reason of its badness it is ever the same: a complete failure to conform with the standard of life, as it is lived in the suburbs of London. Such jealousy as Leontes manifests without the slightest excuse is unknown in the respectable tennis-clubs which girdle the metropolis, and whose members are the most zealous supporters of dramatic art. A bad play, shout our intelligent suburbans, the episodes of which transcend the common lot of men. Let us have realism, they insist, something that is "natural," and we will be content to forego beauty of diction and all the pleasures of the imagination.

But for those who will accept the poet's premisses, and permit him to work out his problem in his own way, "The Winter's Tale" will always remain a masterpiece. From its first Act to its last, Shakespeare gave a free rein to his fancy. He set his scene in no man's land and in no man's time. It was not for nothing that, following Greene, he gave Bohemia a sea-coast, and in a play of pure romance bade his personages consult Apollo's oracle. His scorn of the unities needs no excuse. Who might do what he would, if not Shakespeare? When Time in the play says—

> "Impute it not a crime
> To me or my swift passage, that I slide
> O'er sixteen years and leave the growth untried
> Of that wide gap,"

none will object who has been at the pains to understand the freedom of the Elizabethan drama. If "The Winter's Tale" were a tragedy, compact and severe, the intervention of Time might appear intolerable. It is not a tragedy, but rather

a comedy with tragic elements, and in such a case nobody has a right to trammel the poet's ingenuity.

Of the two stories, intricated in the play, we know not which is better told. The jealousy of Leontes is the more violent for the very reason that it is baseless. That which has been imputed as a fault is one of the virtues of the play. And the character of Leontes is always in harmony with this initial unreason. He does not confidently defend himself. The speeches which he addresses to Camillo are purposely tortuous and confused. He speaks as one whose thoughts come too rapidly upon him, and who expects all men to see the foul images presented to the eye of his diseased mind. His suspicion breeds cruelty, and still he is inarticulate in justification. And when at last his eyes are opened to the truth, his remorse equals the passion of his hate. Nowhere is the vice of jealousy set forth with a better logic than in "The Winter's Tale." There is here no ancient to whisper words of encouragment in the victim's ear. It is Camillo's *rôle* to allay suspicion, to protect the queen against the king's foul charge. Nor does the gallant Paulina soften her harsh words with loyalty. If Leontes knows not the truth, it is not the fault of his friends. But he has dulled the ear of his heart, and obstinately refuses to hear the voice of justice.

Hermione meets her husband's charge with the composure of innocence. She is perfect in dignity and courage. She is "not prone to weeping," as she says, and she accepts her punishment with a brave indignation. She has

> "That honourable grief lodged here which burns
> Worse than tears drown."

Shakespeare never drew a statelier figure than she shows in the Court of Justice. When the oracle pronounces her chaste, she accepts the avowal of her innocence almost in silence. She utters but one word. And she descends in the last Act from the pedestal of the painted statue only to greet her daughter:

> "You gods, look down
> And from your sacred vials pour your graces
> Upon my daughter's head!"

Paulina is made of other stuff, and has not her match in Shakespeare's plays. Loyalty to her queen sharpens her tongue with vituperative eloquence. In attacking the king she knows neither hesitancy nor fear, and as she is quick to denounce so she is fiercely set upon punishment. How should she act otherwise, when she owes to Leontes not merely the ruin of her mistress but the death of Antigonus, her lord? "I, an old turtle," says she,

> "Will wing me to some wither'd bough and there
> My mate, that's never to be found again,
> Lament till I am lost."

And though she pairs off with the aged Camillo, you know that she does no more than obey the convention of the drama.

The scenes in Bohemia are all life and gaiety. Nowhere else has Shakespeare shown a keener delight in the joys of the countryside. Here he speaks the true language of the pastoral, and his shepherds, though they call themselves Bohemians born, think the thoughts and speak the language of rural England. They have haunted the fairs of Warwickshire, and looked on, in willing expectancy, at the Cotswold games. Autolycus, the sturdy beggar, whose traffic is sheets, and who finds that "a quart of ale is a dish for a king," owes something to Harmans' "Caveat," and yet is the gayest scoundrel that ever shammed Abraham or threatened peaceable lieges on the highway. He has "an open ear, a quick eye, and a nimble hand," which are necessary for a cut-purse, and "a good nose, requisite also to smell out work for the other senses." Like his brother in Ben Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair," he knows that the singing of ballads is the best cover for thievery, "so that in this time of lethargy he picked and cut most of their festival purses." With such a merry rogue as this to relieve the tension, shall we not easily support the tragic scenes of jealousy?

And the shepherd and the clown, they are admirable, both of them, and of the soil. Shakespeare knew them well enough, for they dwelt and tilled and tended their sheep not far from his native Stratford. And Perdita herself,—is she not the fairest maiden to whose portrait our Shakespeare set his hand? It is, in truth, by no accident that he has put in her mouth the most beautiful lines of a beautiful play. For let it not be forgotten, when the critics find only folly in "The Winter's Tale," that it is an exquisite poem. Where, indeed, shall you match Perdita's pæan to the flowers?—

> "O Proserpina,
> For the flowers now, that frighted thou let'st fall
> From Dis's waggon! daffodils,
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,
> But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
> Or Cytherea's breath; pale primeroses
> That die unmarried, ere they can behold
> Bright Phœbus in his strength—a malady
> Most incident to maids; bold oxlips and
> The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,
> The flower-de-luce being one! O, these I lack,
> To make you garlands of, and my sweet friend,
> To strew him o'er and o'er!"

There is a passage, English in the very essence of its beauty, which Shakespeare alone could have written, and which carries in every line proof of the mature fancy which composed "The Winter's Tale."

Such is the play which Mr Granville Barker, greatly daring, has set upon the stage of the Savoy Theatre. One thing only was wanted for its fair and adequate production, restraint, and of restraint we were willing to believe Mr Barker capable. He has shown in the past the tact of silence and tranquillity. He has not encouraged his

actors to play the rhetorician or to "create" their parts,—the very bane of acting. And he has mounted "The Winter's Tale" with a proper reticence. He has made no sacrifice to the realism of scenic effect. Only in the scene in which Perdita's cottage is discovered does he permit the representation of plain facts. And as the white columns with their gold curtain are inoffensive, we have nothing but praise for his simple mounting. The Elizabethan Society proved long ago that Shakespeare stands less in need of scenic embellishment than any other dramatist, and Mr Barker has learned his lesson wisely. But then, in the very act of propriety, he outrages all our senses. He gives with one hand, he takes away with another. If he has avoided the pit of elaborate mounting, he has fallen into the pit of elaborate costume. He has prodigiously overdressed the play. From beginning to end it and you are conscious of its clothes. Feathers wave pompously on too many heads. Polixenes always gives you an uneasy feeling as he moves up and down the stage. Of the rest you may say, "I think they bought their doublets in Italy, their round hose in France, and their bonnets in Germany." Here and there Bakst and the Russian ballet are potent influences. Yet it is not the inappropriateness of the business which most acutely disturbs our pleasure. It is the insistence of the hats and jerkins, which fight not always a losing fight with the action of the play.

As the play is overdressed, so it is overacted. Here, indeed, is its most grievous fault. Both Leontes and Hermione have made naught of discipline. From beginning to end they are out of the picture. They recall by a hundred tones and gestures the heyday of the old Lyceum. Leontes especially will permit no emotion to pass without a commentary. He has not mastered the elementary truth that the more deeply emotional is a passage, the more simply it should be spoken. The dramas of Shakespeare above all play themselves. If Mr Ainley had said what he had to say with a studied plainness, every line of his speaking would have gone to our hearts. He is not content with studied plainness. He *acts* every sentence; he is alert, restless, and uncomfortable. He squirms on couches, and tears a passion, which all men understand, to tatters. In such a character as this, says Hazlitt, "Mr Kemble had no occasion to call to his aid either the resources of invention or the tricks of the art: his success depended on the increasing intensity with which he dwelt on a given feeling, or enforced a passion that resisted all interference or control." In other words, he obtained his effect by the measured utterance of Shakespeare's words. If only Mr Barker had remembered the necessity of quietude and composure when he rehearsed the play, how much better would have been the

result! Scarce one of his company has learned the important lesson of standing still. Even Miss Beringer, who in the part of Paulina was most nearly in keeping with the spirit of the play, now and then lost control of herself and of her voice.

Mr Barker's interpretation is, we believe, perfectly sincere. He has done nothing for the mere sake of sensationalism. He can employ his time better than in startling the Philistines, and he has failed in this particular enterprise because he has made the clothes of greater import than the pegs on which they hang, and because the British actor scorns to learn repose. The Post-Impressionists, whose exhibition at the Grafton Gallery attracts the pilgrim of curiosity, are amazing enough, it is true, but the public likes to be amazed, and readily offers its naïveté for the charlatan to play upon. They will hardly persuade the world of their sincerity. However, here are MM. Matisse and Picasso and Braque with their bold experiments in *fumisterie*. And with the uneasy consciousness that their works do not explain themselves, their champions have come forth with commentary and preface. The battle of post-impressionism is won, we are told. We have heard that of many a battle, whose combatants were forgotten in a month. What we ask now, says an ingenuous partisan, is not what does a picture represent, but what "does it make us feel." There is nothing new in that. Wise men have never asked anything else. From the very beginnings of art the world has preferred "feeling" before "representation." Rembrandt felt more keenly and more truly, no doubt, than all the apostles of Post-Impressionism put together; yet his "feeling" did not dim his vision or befog his brain, and a portrait from his hand has "more in common with a piece of music than with a coloured photograph." The new masterpieces of M. Picasso are equidistant from both.

Mr Roger Fry, the most intelligent disciple of the new cult, objects that his favourites are charged with "imposing on the good-natured tolerance of the public." It is a charge, he complains, that is invariably brought against "any new manifestation of creative art." And it is a charge, we may add, that is nearly always well-deserved. Now and then a great master arises, in painting as in literature, who is asked not only to produce his works but to educate his public. How few such there are in a century a very little reflection will explain. The pavement of the world is strewn with the relics of charlatans who set out to astonish the simpleton and were forgotten in the very moment of surprise. And Mr Roger Fry, in recalling the common charge of extravagance and eccentricity, is merely begging the question. It is not because MM. Matisse and Picasso are "new" that they will endure. There is no virtue in newness.

If they endure, it will be only because they are great artists, and we wish that the basis of all the grandeur of their art had been more lucidly explained.

"They aim not at illusion, but at reality," we are told. Or again, they attempt "to create a purely abstract language of form — a visual music." Let us accept these maxims as well as we can, and look at the masterpieces of M. Picasso by the light of them. Here, for instance, is a work called "Head of a Man." Why it is called that we do not know. Perhaps it suggests the sensation which came to M. Picasso when he saw or thought of the man. It is true that in the corner you may observe the letters G. R. as neatly expressed as they might have been in a pre-impressionist picture or a coloured photograph. Doubtless they are the initials of the victim. Towards the centre of the canvas (we would not hurt the sensitive soul of the artist by using the common word picture) a waistcoat button is clearly decipherable. Why the head of the man should persuade M. Picasso to "feel" a waistcoat button Mr Fry does not explain. He is content to describe his works as "recondite," and his style as "pre-eminently plastic." And as we gaze upon this "Head of a Man," or the "Buffalo Bill" which hangs hard-by, and differs chiefly from the "Head of a Man" because it has no waistcoat button, we are appalled at the primeval gloom of M. Picasso's "sensations." If this be "visual music," by all means let us translate it as quickly as possible from the eye to the ear. For the eye it has no colour. A general dinginess covers it. It has no pattern, no shape, no depth. It is a hieroglyphic which resembles nothing else than the tops of telephone-poles. And if M. Picasso is bent thus earnestly upon abstraction, why does he submit to the ancient habit of giving names to his performances? Musicians do not set upon their works such conventional titles as "Buffalo Bill," and we object to M. Picasso, not because he has retreated too far from the visual world, but because he clings too desperately to it. How shall you forgive the high-priest of abstraction that errant waistcoat button, which could not have been more realistically set forth in a dastardly oleograph?

The performances of M. Picasso will, of course, be no more seen, and if he be a man of humour, as we daresay he is, he is now laughing at the grave panegyric of Mr Roger Fry. But one fact emerges from his celebrated "Head of a Man," and that is his love of the alphabet. No doubt his ingenuousness persuades him to believe that he is still a happy child picking out letters upon the floor. His pupil, M. Braque, is still more deeply devoted to this boyish artifice. If he cannot paint, he seems to say to us, at least he can spell. Here he gives us, for instance, his "sensation" of the "Bouillon Kub."

Like his master, he makes a foolish concession to those who take an idiot's interest in the external world. And it is not without curiosity that we examine the "sensation" which the "Bouillon Kub" imparts to this sensitive artist. First, there stands boldly intelligible: KUB. So we know where we are. Then the figure 10 emerges from the obscurity. And transversely along the canvas run the letters JOU, from which we may perhaps imagine that as M. Braque took his ease in the Bouillon Kub, he idly turned over the pages of this morning's *Journal*. For the rest there is a suggestion of cubes and telephone-poles. And if this be a fair explanation, we can only commiserate M. Braque upon the sad poverty of his "visual music." Why 10, M. Braque? Surely ten-ness is not the essence of the Bouillon; and surely there is no restaurant in Paris, or elsewhere, where the *Journal* may not be read by anxious clients. Let us have "sensations" by all means. There is, as we have said, no novelty in them. But let us have something more amusing, more individual, than this solemn "visual music," which derives its tunes from a box of lettered bricks.

If you still entertain a doubt as to the efficacy of the alphabet, cast your eye upon a portrait of Kubelik, also the handiwork of the valiant M. Braque. It would be impossible to distinguish it from the Bouillon, which it resembles precisely in shape and colour, did we not read in bold and clear caligraphy the words KUBELIK and MOZART. The imagination of the "Kubists," then, seems a trifle limited. They are most intimately at home with subjects which may be spelt with a K. Kubla Khan would obviously stimulate their fancy, and the dictionary has revealed to us a family of jellyfishes known as "Cubomedusæ," which must have been specially designed by Providence for cubic treatment. How bravely the name might stand in capital letters across the top of the canvases! Is it too much to hope that M. Picasso or M. Braque will indulge our curiosity?

M. Matisse, great master as he is, has not the courage of M. Picasso. He has not yet dared to deny the existence of the visible world. He is old-fashioned enough to represent natural objects, though it is evident that he acutely feels the disgrace, for at least he makes the natural objects of his choice as little like their originals as possible. It is not his opinion, as yet, that the world may be saved by a cube. But he, too, paints by a theory, and has had the excellent good luck to make a movement of his own. Some sixty years ago the English Pre-Raphaelites chose to believe that art had come to an end in the fifteenth century, and they went back to Botticelli and the others for inspiration. For M. Matisse the procedure of the Pre-Raphaelites was tame indeed. The period which he has chosen for imitation is the

period of childhood. He is naïf, he believes, like an infant. Some of his *confrères* may take comfort in the "Images d'Epinal." They are far too highly sophisticated for him. A child, a slate, and a box of chalks are all the encouragement that he wants. But he forgets that the naïveté, which is professed on purpose, contradicts itself, and that he who would be a theoretic child without childhood is the oldest man of them all. The frank folly of the gentleman in pyjamas, which is called "Conversation," must be patent to every eye, and the boasted "simplication" of the "Panier Rouge" is far too complex to deceive.

The Post-Impressionists are merely anarchists. The art of painting is a representative art. Such it has been held to be by all the world. Such the Post-Impressionists believe it to be in their hearts, as is proved by their foolish concessions to popularity in the way of waistcoat-buttons and titles. They are not strong enough to shake off all the chains of tradition. They cling feverishly to the old habit of portraiture. They call their hieroglyphics "head of a woman," and so on, as though they were mere workmen clamouring for a place on the line at the Salon. But they would have us all understand, despite their lack of logic, that the visible world lies under the ban of disgrace. The masters, Velasquez and the others, have known how to represent it. They have stooped to the mean artifice of interesting their spectators by an association of ideas. The Post-Impressionists soar high above this weakness. For their part, they affect to represent nothing. They have grasped the great truth that to-day there is a glamour about incapacity of any kind. To obey the laws of grammar is a sin in their eyes. They cannot equal or surpass in the genius of selection, in beauty of line or colour, those who have gone before them. So nothing is left them save anarchy. It is easy and profitable, they think, to do what none other has ever done before. And being guilty of intentional charlatanry, they proclaim aloud that before them there was no art at all. The one danger which threatens their peace of mind is that it is impossible to put a drag upon lawlessness. In two years another game will be invented, and MM. Matisse and Picasso will appear *vieux jeu* to the art students, who will then delight to expose the pitiful *blague* of cubism. Meanwhile, it need not surprise us that these painters have each his own following. It is as easy to imitate M. Matisse or M. Picasso as it is to imitate Sir H. Herkomer. The same quality—the quality of the ape—is required for either process, and there are many who find it a constant satisfaction to be in the movement. Who, in truth, is so blind that he cannot see the allurement of waistcoat-buttons? Alas, that allure-

ment, like others, endures but a season!

Nothing in art or literature has ever survived by making a mere appeal to fashion. When Beckford first published his incomparable 'Vathek,' it might have seemed that he was catching at the flood the tide of popularity which set towards the East. The publication of 'The Episodes of Vathek'[1] proves that this suspicion, were it entertained, would have been groundless. As 'Vathek' has survived all the shifts and changes of fashion, so the stories recently brought to light are as fresh and vivid as they were on the day when they were written. You may read them with pleasure in the admirable French of Beckford, with its brave reminiscences of Voltaire, or in the solid prose of Sir Frank Marzials. And now at last we have got them, we are not sorry that the author never incorporated them in the text of 'Vathek,' whose exquisite proportion they would have outraged, and in whose proximity they would not have fared as handsomely as they fare alone.

And first we must congratulate Mr Lewis Melville upon his notable discovery. The Episodes have always been known to exist. Beckford not merely read them to Cyrus Redding, but in 1815 threatened to publish them. That they were not given to the world seems to have been due to a difference with Bentley. At anyrate, they were hidden away in a box at Hamilton Palace until Mr Melville found them, and he deserves all the credit which belongs to a piece of excellent good fortune. The stories are as grim, as full of mystery, as 'Vathek' itself. Dives and Afrits and Mages darken their happenings. There is a thrill of horror in every page. Only Beckford's sinister imagination could have pictured black chests whose steel padlocks seemed encrusted with blood, or carpets of a thousand hues which "moved slowly to and fro, as if painfully stirred by human creatures stifling beneath their weight." From the beginning to the end of the Episodes the authentic touch is visible. None but Beckford could have written them; none but Beckford, a mystificator always, could have left their origin hidden in uncertainty. Mr Melville's "Introduction," which consists chiefly of the correspondence which passed between the Rev. Samuel Henley, who translated 'Vathek,' and Beckford, fails to unravel the skein. Two things are clear from it, that Beckford intrusted Henley with the task of translating 'Vathek,' and that Henley, in publishing the English version before the French original, was guilty of a grave breach of trust. For this offence there seems no palliation. A still deeper offence was to

[1] 'The Episodes of Vathek,' by William Beckford. Translated by Sir Frank T. Marzials. With an Introduction by Lewis Melville. London: S. Swift & Co.

suppress the name of the author altogether, which is what the ingenuous Henley did, and to pretend that the story was translated not from the French but from the Arabic.

This was flat piracy, and it is to be hoped that Beckford, always ready with invective, dealt faithfully with the deceitful Henley. And the deception practised by Henley has been fertile in confusion. The origin of 'Vathek' and the 'Episodes' has never been plainly cleared up. That the Hall of Eblis owed touches to Fonthill we may well believe. Beckford may have spoken the truth when he assured Cyrus Redding that "all the females mentioned in 'Vathek' were portraits of those in the domestic establishment at Old Fonthill, their imaginary ill or good qualities exaggerated to suit my purpose." But when we have admitted so much, the problem is still unsolved. The question remains: was Beckford indebted to an Eastern original, or was his story the natural fruit of his invention?

For more than a century the question has been debated fruitlessly. A clue exists in the copy of 'Vathek' belonging to the Bodleian. On the second page the following may be found in Douce's handwriting:[1] "One of Wortley Montagu's MSS. fell into Beckford's hands. A Turk, who was on a visit to him, translated into very bad English the story of 'Vathek,' which was in this MS. Mr Beckford translated the Turk's version into French with great alterations and additions. Mr, now Dr H[enley] procured Mr Beckford's translation, which he rendered into English, with notes and illustrations, in which form it was printed, as in the present copy. Dr H. thought that Mr B. could have added but little, as the text afforded such genuine matter for the illustration of Oriental manners; but he felt himself at liberty to make some slight alteration in Beckford's translation. F. D., from Dr H.'s own information, February 14, 1802." Francis Douce's statement is explicit, and so far as it can be checked it is accurate. The English version of 'Vathek' is so good, that we should like to believe that it was Beckford's own. This belief is no longer possible. The letters which passed between Henley and Beckford make it perfectly clear not only that Henley translated the French of Beckford, but that he composed the notes and made "some slight alteration in the text." So much is certain. What we should like to know more about is Wortley Montagu's MSS. and the fabulous Turk. In a controversy of this kind we cannot accept Beckford's unsupported word, for he was, as we have said,

[1] This and more to the same purpose may be found in an article contributed to 'The National Observer' in 1892 by Mr Harold Parsons, traveller, soldier, and man of letters.

always a man of mystery. But it is significant that in the preface to the first French edition he speaks of the oriental manuscripts, "laissés par feu M. Wortley Montagu, et dont les originaux se trouvent à Londres chez M. Palmer, Régisseur du Duc de Bedford." The Wortley Montagu, whose manuscripts played a part of scandal at any rate in the production of 'Vathek,' was the son of Lady Mary, and was the first European to be vaccinated. He spent the greater part of his life wandering up and down the Continent, and was painted by Romney. Mr Harold Parsons, in the article we have cited, adds a few characteristic details. "A poseur," says Mr Parsons, "his life through, he died a Mussulman. And whether his be the Arabian Nights and other tales now in the Bodleian as the 'W. Montagu MSS.' I know not: but he left his Turkish and Arabic MSS. to his bastard Fortunatus, 'otherwise Jassoud, a Black,' and the others to his son Edward, who gave them to a son of Sir W. Dolben, of Northamptonshire." He died in 1776, and 'Vathek' was written some five years later. What became of his MSS. seems uncertain. Beckford himself speaks of M. Palmer, while others suggest Jassoud, a Black, or young Dolben. But here, evidently, are all the materials of a fair solution. It should not be beyond human ingenuity to trace the MSS. of Wortley Montagu, and an oriental scholar could then measure with perfect accuracy the originality of Beckford against the debt which he is said to have owed to the dark inventions and the grave fancy of the East.

The 'Letters of George Meredith,'[1] edited with a proper reticence by his son, are the plain record of a courageous career. In all that Meredith did and thought literature held the foremost place. The art of his choice was an imperious mistress, he her devoted slave. To give freely the best that was in him was the only course possible for him to pursue, and if it brought him disdain the fault was not his. The sincerity of his printed prose, moreover, is abundantly proved by this sheaf of letters. No writer was ever more of a piece than Meredith. He wrote the simplest note with the same sense of the pomp of words which breathed always in his novels. Briefly, he was an artist in small things as in great. If he accepted an invitation to dinner he stamped it with his own impress. To those critics who were pleased to believe that Meredith was purposely and maliciously obscure, these letters will come as an awakening shock. He wrote the only prose possible to him, and if we detect precisely the same style in his published works and in his familiar letters, we have no

[1] 'Letters of George Meredith,' Collected and Edited by his Son. In two volumes. London: Constable & Co.

longer the smallest right to doubt his absolute sincerity. Turn the pages where you will, and you will find the authentic Meredith at work. None but he, for instance, could have written this comment upon Tennyson's "Holy Grail": "The euphuist's tongue, the exquisite's leg, the curate's moral sentiments, the British matron and her daughter's purity of tone—so he talks, so he walks, so he snuffles, so he appears divine. I repeat with my grandam, — to think! — to hear the chorus of praise, too! Why, this stuff is not the Muse,—it's Musery. The man has got hold of the Muses' clothes-line and hung it with jewellery." It is a harsh enough judgment, and when we think of the "Holy Grail," with its lines "satin lengths" and its figures "Sèvres China," not undeserved. And at any-rate, Meredith, having sharpened his rapier, sheathes it instantly. "But the 'Lucretius,'" says he, "is grand."

Yet it is not for their wise commentary on life and literature, it is not for the unfolding of their author's character, that we value these Letters most highly. It is for the keen struggle which they depict against the scorn and indifference of the people. With little else than a sure confidence in himself to support him, George Meredith gave the world of his best for some thirty unrewarded years. And in this long fight with adversity he showed always a brave and sanguine temper. It is always his new book which will prosper. "I shall be a millionaire next year," he writes to a friend. And the new book "moved" no more rapidly than the old ones, and the millions retreated farther than ever from his pocket. At every step he was dogged by the same misunderstanding. "I see the illustrious Hutton of 'The Spectator' laughs inanely at my futile effort to produce an impression on his public. I suppose I shall have to take to journalism." As late as 1887 he wrote to a young American: "In England I am encouraged but by a few enthusiasts. I read in a critical review of some verses of mine the other day that I was 'a harlequin and a performer of antics.' I am accustomed to that kind of writing as our husting orator is to the dead cat and the brickbat flung in his face." Even his friends despaired of his ever making headway against the adverse tide. They gave him advice for sympathy, and urged him blankly to do something else, not knowing that for Meredith compromise in the matter of his craft was impossible. One of them declared in 1871 that "he knows a lady—a great novel-reader—who finds 'Harry Richmond' quite unintelligible in parts. He advises me in these serious times to take to political writing." Meredith was deaf alike to counsel and reproach. He wrote for many years without a fair hope of gain. And at the end of his life he had the

supreme satisfaction of having expressed the best that was in him with no eye cast upon a clamouring public. With the very best reason in the world might he have said with Mozart that he wrote for himself and a few friends.

But man cannot live upon self-expression. And Meredith, while he permitted himself the luxury of writing as he thought right, was keenly alive to the duty of earning bread and butter. He was no shirker, hiding himself behind his temperament and his necessities. He found no toil too burdensome to be carried. "I never refuse work," said he. If the world would not read nor understand his books, he was not afraid of drudgery. He wrote for journals, and he read for publishers. Whatever he undertook he performed with a fiery zeal. Some of the letters here quoted, which he addressed to authors who had submitted their works for his opinion, prove how keenly he felt the responsibility of his office, with how kindly a wisdom he reproved or counselled. And always apart from the inevitable drudgery he kept a space and a time for the work which really mattered to him, and which still really matters to us.

Thus we perceive the true value of Meredith's letters. They are letters of a sane mind and a good courage. Yet the burden which he had gaily borne himself he had no wish to lay upon others. Did you ever hear of a man of letters urging his craft upon another? Each one of us thinks the craft imperative. Each one of us is prepared to make the sacrifice which it demands. But none who has felt the strain desires to enrol others in the army. And when George Meredith found in his son Arthur a love of the inkpot, he sternly interposed. "My novels," he told him, "have been kept back by my having had to write on newspapers — the only things that paid. So take this as a moral: don't think of literature as a profession." The advice fell upon deaf ears, as it fell upon Meredith's own ears, and Arthur's desire to write still grew upon him. Again his father intervened. "When I was informed," said he, "of your wishing to throw up your situation at Lille that you might embrace the profession of literature, I was alarmed. My own mischance in that walk I thought a sufficient warning." If ever a man was conscious of his power, it was Meredith; if ever a man succeeded at last in achieving his artistic purpose, it was the author of 'Harry Richmond'; yet he speaks gravely of his mischance, and holds himself up to an aspiring son as one whose example should be avoided.

The experience of George Meredith is the general experience of the great. He was no Post-Impressionist aiming at eccentricity. No writer ever worked in sterner obedience to the great tradition than he.

The masters always claimed his obedience. He desired nothing better than to be understood. But his sincerity differed from the sincerity of the popular writer, and he was forced to make a crutch of journalism that he might cross in some comfort the desert of life. Thus it has always been, and there is no reason to regret it. None but the commonplace man can expect to find his public ready-made for him, and none but the hero has the strength to conquer a hostile public and survive. Nor may the Post-Impressionists of art or literature find comfort in Meredith's mischance. It was not for him to invent a new art or to masquerade as a pious innovator. The people found him obscure because he did not make the expected phrase. But he did not disdain lucidity. He recognised, what the Post-Impressionists will not, that there is a difference between pronouns and adjectives, and that verbs are necessary to sentences. He was always stern in loyalty, as readers of his 'Letters' may discover, to the time-honoured laws of the language. In one point only do we differ from him. He appears to have thought that there was something hostile in the English temperament. He talked vaguely of Celtic sympathy, and looked towards America. And in the end it was from England that appreciation came. A like complaint has been often made. We remember how Verlaine, neglected in France, sought help in England and America, and sought in vain. Thus will it ever be. One supporter abroad will seem worth a hundred at home. If a prophet is without honour in his own country, he will always snatch eagerly at the mere hint of honour that comes from abroad. But it is always his own kindred who in the end sets the wreath upon the poet's brow.

THE ROMANCE OF INDIAN HISTORY.

BY SIR THEODORE MORISON, K.C.I.E.

THERE are few countries whose history is more romantic than India; yet it has taken the English people an extraordinarily long time to find this out. It might have been supposed that our imagination would easily have been kindled by the story of the splendid princes who gloried and drank deep in the gardens and marble palaces by the banks of the Jamna; but such are the limitations of the human mind that we are usually unable to perceive beauty or romance in what is remote from our own experience. The unknown can only become romantic to us when it is linked up with conceptions which have already stirred our imagination. When a consummate journalist long ago wished to awaken interest in India he recognised this, and prudently abstained from referring directly to Fatehpur Sikri or Shahjehan, but described the glories of the Moghul Empire in terms of Europe. "The people of India," said Macaulay, "had reared cities larger and fairer than Saragossa or Toledo, and buildings more beautiful and costly than the Cathedral of Seville. They could show bankers richer than the richest firms of Barcelona or Cadiz, viceroys whose splendour far surpassed that of Ferdinand the Catholic, myriads of cavalry and long trains of artillery which would have astonished the Great Captain." One is tempted to think that Macaulay might have found a yet more suggestive parallel in the 'Arabian Nights.' He might with more truth than usual have said that every schoolboy knows the story of Harun al Rashid and Zobeide, and even Baghdad was probably not more resplendent than Delhi in its prime. Something, too, of the spirit of an Eastern fairy tale hung about the descendants of Tamerlane. They would occasionally do the wild extravagant things which we all in imagination demand of the real despot, but which outside the pages of the 'Arabian Nights' he never does. Like "good Haroun Alraschid in his golden prime," Humayun once rewarded a water-carrier who had saved his life by seating him for a day upon his throne in Agra, and from sunrise to sunset the peasant was actually a king. In the palace of Fatehpur Sikri may still be seen a great tesselated pavement on which Akbar is said to have played chess in the cool of the evening, his pawns being sixteen beautiful slave girls, richly dressed and covered with jewels, who became the prize of the victor. And if ever the diamonds, rubies, and emeralds which sparkle through the 'Arabian Nights' were seen of waking eyes, it was at the

jewelled court of the Great Moghul. Even our sober compatriot, Sir Thomas Roe, slips into oriental metaphor when describing them. He once got a peep at the two principal wives of Jehangir behind a screen, and, in spite of the obscurity in which they sat, he was able to make out that they were "indifferently" fair, and he adds: "If there had been no other light, their diamonds and pearls had sufficed to show them." The monarch himself fairly blazed with jewels. "On his head he wore a rich turbant with a plume of heron's feathers, not many but long. On one side hung a ruby unset, as big as a walnut; on the other side a diamond as large; in the middle an emerald like a heart, much bigger. His staff was wound about with a chain of great pearl, rubies and diamonds drill'd. About his neck he wore a chain of three strings of most excellent pearl, the largest I ever saw." And so accoutred, with English gloves stuck under his girdle, the Great Moghul went for the first time to take his seat in a coach.

But there is really no need of analogies drawn from Spain or the 'Arabian Nights' to make Indian history interesting. It is of itself full of the charm of romance, and if Englishmen have hitherto failed to find this out, the blame lies with our English historians of India. It must be confessed that most of the writers on Indian history accessible to the general reader are frigid and tedious. They have too often been wanting in a generous enthusiasm for their subject, and have been at greater pains to point out faults than to appreciate greatness. But this is no way to write history: it is not enough to say that Jehangir was a drunkard, that Shahjehan was a voluptuary, and to label Aurangzib a bigot or a hypocrite. It is true that the descendants of Babar were very human, and had an abundant measure of human frailty, but these crude epithets do not help us to understand how they created a magnificent empire out of next to nothing, how they founded a new school of art and raised buildings which are the wonder of the world, and how they drew together a glittering court which dazzled Frenchmen who had seen Louis le Grand at Versailles. And the Moghuls did even more than this—they achieved something in the higher walks of statesmanship which nobody, before or since, has quite succeeded in rivalling. They cast a spell over men's hearts, which is comparable only to the spell which Imperial Rome cast upon the peoples of Western Europe, and in the short space of 150 to 200 years they created among the diverse races and creeds of Northern India something approaching to a sentiment of nationality. The men who did this may have been loose livers, but they must have been a great deal more besides, and we can dispense with the sermon upon their private lives until we

have been made to understand their essential greatness. Mr H. G. Keene and Mr Stanley Lane-Poole have done much to place the history of Muhamadan India in the right perspective, but a book was still wanted which would make a wider public appreciate the charm of this romantic epoch. Such a book has, I think, at last appeared under the title 'When Kings rode to Delhi,' by Miss Gabrielle Festing.[1] The particular merit of Miss Festing is that she feels the pathos and romance which hang about the crumbling walls of Delhi, and makes us feel it too. Her little book does not profess to be a contribution to the scholarship of the world, but it is a contribution, and, I think, a valuable one, to our historic sympathies. No reader can lay it down without a warmer feeling for the brave men, and for the noble women too, who fought, and loved, and died upon the storied plain which stretches from the great Minar of Qutbuddin Aibek to the statue of Nicholson.

The history of Muhamadan dominion in India may be said to begin from the year 1206 A.D., when Qutbuddin assumed the insignia of sovereignty, and from this date to 1526, when the first of the Moghuls invaded India, thirty-four kings sat on the throne of Delhi; but so completely have they been eclipsed by the glory of their successors that popular imagination has retained but few of their names, and even Muhamadans hold their memory in comparatively small account. They lived in a wild age, and most of their time was spent in fighting: sometimes the kingdom of Delhi shrank to very small dimensions, but when, as not infrequently happened, a strong man rose to the throne, he disciplined the Afghan and Turkoman marauders into an obedient host and ruled over a wide kingdom. Such a one was Balban, who had originally come to Delhi as a slave in singularly unpropitious circumstances. The King of Delhi had commissioned a merchant to buy slaves for him in Central Asia. Ninety-and-nine did the king approve when he returned, but when he saw the hundredth, a mean-looking little fellow, he exclaimed, "I will not take this one."

"Master of the World!" cried Balban piteously, "for whom hast thou bought all these?"

"For myself," laughed the king.

"Then buy me for the love of God!" pleaded Balban.

The king bought him, and Balban rose step by step, as other slaves had done before him, until he became Wazir and the real ruler of the kingdom, while his nominal master devoted his time to making copies of the Koran "with great taste and elegance." For twenty years he governed for this gentle recluse, putting

[1] 'When Kings Rode to Delhi.' By Gabrielle Festing. Edinburgh and London: Wm. Blackwood & Sons. Illustrated. 7s. 6d. net.

down rebellion and punishing conspiracy, and when his master died he stepped into his place by natural right. The country had peace in his time, the greatest blessing which any king of the Middle Ages, whether in Europe or Asia, could confer on his subjects. "He was a king, courteous and powerful; an elephant in his time would avoid treading on an ant," the chronicler quaintly remarks. When his strong hand was removed from the helm of the State men grieved bitterly for him whom they named "the father of his people." I do not know that any of his buildings remain, but I remember that once when I was sitting among the ruins of Old Delhi some peasants brought me a handful of old copper coins which they had picked up when ploughing the fields, and on two or three of them I deciphered the half-obliterated name and titles of the great Balban.

It is indeed among the ruins that cumber the plain of Delhi, and not from the pages of the historian, that one best realises the greatness of these early Moslem princes. Their massive forts and palaces still convey the impression of departed magnificence; it was no petty state, no ephemeral kingdom, which reared these enormous blocks of stone and covered them with carving as delicate and beautiful as lace. But nowadays the corn and barley grow high on the land where once were crowded streets, and the rustic who stables his oxen in a king's tomb does not even know whose dust he irreverently disturbs. Not far from the tomb of Humayun, on the way to the Kutb Minar, stand three magnificent tombs of kings of the Lodi dynasty: they rise, massive and solemn, out of the surrounding crops, age has weathered the stone to an unusually sombre colour, and the dark gaunt walls are naked of ornament. A small village nestles nowadays at the foot of those great buildings, from which once, as I picked my way through the muck of the byre, I got a rustic to lead me to the gateway of the mausoleum. "Whose tomb is this?" I asked. He scratched his head and could not say, but when I chaffed him for not knowing, he adventured, "Perhaps it is Gabriel's" (the Archangel's). The poor Hindu had probably some confused recollection of a sonorous Arabic name, and did not know enough Muhamadan theology to distinguish between the name of an angel and a mortal man. I suspect him to have been fumbling for the name of Abraham, for Ibrahim was the name of the last king of the house of Lodi. It was he whom Babar defeated at Panipat, where he met his death in a manner befitting the warrior kings of whom he was the last. When his army was defeated, a courtier urged Ibrahim to take flight; but he replied that his friends and companions had fallen round him till his horse was dyed to his chest in their blood; his cause was lost, he would die like a soldier and a

king. He was as good as his word: the victorious Babar mounted the throne of Delhi, and a new epoch in Indian history was opened.

No fairy tale has ever presented a more charming prince than the chivalrous Babar. At the age of twelve he found himself King of Farghana. After some wild adventures, in the course of which he sat for a hundred days upon the throne of Timur in silken Samarkand, he lost his ancestral kingdom and went forth into the world to seek his fortune; he wandered barefoot on the hills and lodged in the shepherds' huts, and at last, with a ragged band of followers, "with brogues on their feet, clubs in their hands, and long frocks over their shoulders," he gained possession of Kabul and Ghazni. Here he stayed ten years, and "though nothing in his eyes," as Miss Festing says, "would ever equal Farghana, the lost valley clipped by snowy mountains, with its melons and pears, its tulips and roses and fat pheasants which he wistfully recalled to the end of his days, he learned to love the cool gardens and running streams of the country of his adoption." Never had any man more than Babar the *joie de vivre*, the overflowing vitality which enables its possessor to take all Fortune's gifts with gladness and to put some of his own spirit into those about him. Everything, to him, was to be enjoyed as part of the great game, whether it was fighting for dear life against an enemy who had routed half his followers, drinking with boon companions beneath the stars, toiling through a mountain-pass through many feet of snow for a week at a time, or composing verses as he galloped after a flying enemy. And with all this keen relish of his own pleasures he had a heart of incomparable warmth, which made him the staunchest of friends. Even in the elation of victory and amid the preoccupations of settling a new conquest, his first thought seems to have been for the friends and relations he had left at home. As soon as he was master of the riches of Delhi he began to make plans for distributing them, and he must literally have spent days and days in selecting fitting presents to each one of his old companions in Kabul. His daughter, Gul Badan Begum, tells us how "all the ladies of the royal household at Kabul were summoned into the garden of the Audience Hall to receive the Emperor's presents. To each princess was given a dancing girl from Delhi, and a gold plate full of gems, and four trays of coins, and nine sorts of Indian stuffs—kincobs, and muslins, and so forth—all chosen for her by Babar himself. Jewels and stuffs were distributed to all the harem nurses, and to his foster brethren, and 'to the ladies and all who pray for me,'—so numerous a list that it was three days before all was divided, and the solemn prayer and thanksgiving made by the assembled ladies in conclusion, as Babar had required. 'They were uplifted with pride,' the princess tells us, and there was

no small cause for it, when the master of Dehli found time among his many preoccupations to choose out gifts for each of those whom he left behind him."

Babar brought with him to India a superior civilisation; his savage ancestors, the Mongols, after laying waste the beautiful cities of Mesopotamia and Persia, had themselves acquired some tincture of Arabic civilisation; like the barbarians who overran the Roman Empire, they adopted the religion and some at least of the culture of the people whom they had done their best to annihilate. That Babar had been brought up in more cultured surroundings than he found at Agra or Delhi is sufficiently proved by his observations upon India. "Hindustan," he says, "is a country that has but little to recommend it. The inhabitants are not good-looking; they have no idea of the pleasures of society; they have no genius or generalising talent; neither polish of manner, amiability, nor sympathetic feeling; neither ingenuity or mechanical invention, nor knowledge or skill in architecture. They have no decent houses, good fruit, ice, or cold water; their markets are ill supplied; they have neither public baths nor colleges, neither candles nor candlesticks. If you want to read or write by night, you must have a filthy, half-naked fellow standing over you all the time with a flaring torch."

It was to the culture which the Moghuls brought with them from Central Asia that India owed the remarkable progress in literature and the fine arts which the seventeenth century witnessed. What triumphs the Moghuls achieved in architecture it is not necessary to explain; there are few Europeans who do not know and value that graceful and majestic style of architecture which found its highest expression in the Moti Masjid and Taj Mahal at Agra, and the Cathedral Mosque of Delhi. But fewer of us realise that they developed a school of drawing, which has left us works of art of permanent value. The beauty of the outline drawings of the Moghul school may now be realised from the reproductions in Mr Havell's illuminating book on 'Indian Sculpture and Painting,' which has come as a revelation to many of us. "The reproductions," as Mr Havell says, "will give some idea of the wonderful distinction, delicacy, and charm, and withal masterful strength of this Indian outline drawing, though there is in it an elusive quality which no process of reproduction can preserve. Apparently without effort, and with the most simple means, his unfaltering line flowing in a never broken rhythm, the Mogul artist gives us a perfect totality, full of form, character, and life. There is no weakness, no hesitation, or attempt to shirk difficulties, so that one can share the artist's full delight in the perfection of his technique. With all the

sincerity, truthfulness, and perfect finish of the old Dutch and Flemish masters, these drawings have a delicate flavour of their own, and subtlety and sensitiveness which suggests the music of the Indian *Vina*, or the sonnets of Hafiz and Omar Khayam. And though they are only shaded outlines, with an occasional discreet touch of gold or colour, they are perfectly complete and satisfying as works of art, for the strength of the drawing gives them all the relief of a finished cameo."

Since there were at Delhi artists of whom so competent a critic as Mr Havell can speak in these terms, it is not surprising that the Moghul nobles admired and appreciated the works of European painters; even in the reign of Akbar, Abul Fazl had talked of "the wonderful works of the European painters who have attained world-wide fame." In the succeeding reign artists received even greater encouragement, for Jehangir was a great patron, and, according to himself, a good judge of art. "I am very fond of pictures," he says, "and have such discrimination in judging them that I can tell the name of the artist, whether living or dead." Perhaps the best evidence of the intelligent appreciation of art existing at the Moghul Court is that given by Sir Thomas Roe. Like the good citizen of London he was, he realised that an ambassador's duty is to push English trade abroad, and he sent home a list of the articles which would find a ready market in India: among these he recommends "choice pictures, especially histories, or other that have many figures, as church work or night work or land-skip, but good, for they understand them as well as we."

Nor were painting and architecture the only arts which flourished at the Court of the Moghuls; music was also cultivated, and according to Indian evidence was greatly developed. Of the progress achieved by Indian musicians few Europeans are capable of judging, for to most of us they speak an unknown tongue, whose beauty we are totally unable to appreciate. The same was probably true in the seventeenth century, but it is interesting to note that the Frenchman Bernier learned to take pleasure in the hautboys and cymbals that brayed from the Nakarah-Khanah of Delhi. "On my first arrival," he says, "it stunned me so as to be insupportable, but such is the power of habit that this same noise is heard by me with pleasure; in the night particularly, when in bed and afar on my terrace, the music sounds in my ears as solemn, grand, and melodious."

The spread of culture and civilisation in India began to attract visitors from foreign countries to the Court of Delhi. We hear of embassies from Persia, Arabia, and Abyssinia, and relations with Arakan and the Far East. Little by little Europe learned from Dutch and English traders that a

magnificent kingdom had arisen on the banks of the Jamna, and historians and geographers began to interest themselves in the civilisation and resources of the "Great Mogul." When Bernier came to see de la Mothe le Vayer as he lay on his death-bed, almost his last utterance was the greeting, "Eh bien! quelles nouvelles avez vous du Grand Mogol?" The heightened esteem which European nations began to feel for India is evidenced by the kind of men who came to her from Europe. The earliest European visitors had been intrepid missionaries like Father Rudolfo, who would have braved any perils and hardships to spread the Gospel, or hardy seamen like Captain Hawkins, who would have sailed into any port where the El Dorado might be found. But the travellers of the next generation were cast in a different mould; they were grave and prosperous merchants like Sir Thomas Roe and Tavernier, or professional men like Doctor Francois Bernier, M.D., of the Faculty of Montpellier, who came from motives of intelligent curiosity.

Their records are of peculiar interest, because they were men capable of comparing the civilisation of India with that of contemporary Europe, and their observations give us some measure of the progress which India had achieved under the Moghuls. They gave the palm to their own country, but it is clear that they did not feel that Indian civilisation belonged to an inferior order: it was different in kind, but belonged approximately to the same class. Bernier was evidently preoccupied with the desire to appraise the relative values of French and Indian civilisation. "You will be anxious," he wrote to Le Vayer in 1663, "to learn if Delhi and Agra rival Paris in beauty, extent, and number of inhabitants," and he proceeds to formulate his answer at great length: eventually he gives the preference to Paris, very largely because of the shops. "That which so much contributes to the beauty of European towns, the brilliant appearance of the shops, is wanting in Delhi. For though this city be the seat of a powerful and magnificent court, where an infinite quantity of the richest commodities is necessarily collected, yet there are no streets like ours of S. Denis, which has not perhaps its equal in any part of Asia."

It would be disingenuous to cite Bernier as an authority for the opinion that Delhi offered as many opportunities for a pleasant and cultivated life in the seventeenth century as Paris. That view he certainly did not hold; the *cuisine* of the Moghuls would alone have been enough to prevent that.[1] But the point I wish to make is that Bernier thought

[1] "You may judge from what I have said," he writes, after a melancholy survey of the food to be had in Delhi, "whether a lover of good cheer ought to quit Paris for the sake of visiting Delhi."

the two civilisations sufficiently comparable to be classed together. A hundred years later no European would have dreamt of instituting such a comparison; the disparity between India and Europe by then had become so great that it would have been futile to speak of Murshadabad and Paris or Poona and London in the same breath. But in the seventeenth century, before Nadir Shah had sacked Delhi and before the Marathas had wasted the land, I doubt whether the superiority of Europe was at all considerable. Bernier, it is true, is often quoted as an authority for the opposite opinion, but some of the shortcomings which he noted in the Moghul polity and in Indian manners were shortcomings from which even France, the most civilised country of Europe, had only recently emancipated herself. He pours, for instance, infinite contempt upon the Indian belief in astrology, and winds up a long tirade by the remark, "The ignorant and infatuated people really believe that the stars have an influence which the astrologers can control." I doubt very much whether the belief of these "ignorant and infatuated people" would have caused any surprise in Paris outside the cultivated circle in which Bernier moved. Voltaire tells us that everybody in France believed in astrologers at the beginning of the seventeenth century. "Even the austere Duc de Sulli records seriously the predictions which were made regarding Henri IV., and such power had this superstition that care was taken to hide an astrologer close to the bedroom of the queen, Anne of Austria, when Louis XIV. was born." As Louis XIV. was born only twenty-five years before Bernier wrote his letter, it is difficult to believe that his contempt for astrology was very widely shared in France.

But it would not be fair to cite only those passages of Bernier in which he is guilty of partiality to his own compatriots. He gives us several interesting pictures of Court life at Delhi, and as he was an educated man and competent to weigh evidence, I would rather give credence to his report, short as was his stay in India, than to the gossip of Menucci, who retails the tittle-tattle of the bazaar with little discrimination. There is one passage in Bernier's letter to Le Vayer, which throws an unexpected light upon the Court of the Moghuls: it describes a scene which seems to belong rather to Paris than to Delhi.

"A whimsical kind of fair is sometimes held during these festivities in the *Mehale*, or royal Seraglio; it is conducted by the handsomest and most engaging of the wives of the Omrahs and Mansabdars [nobles and grandees]. The articles exhibited are beautiful brocades, rich embroideries of the newest fashion, turbans elegantly worked on cloth of gold, fine muslins worn by women of quality, and some other articles of high price. These bewitching females act

the part of traders, while the purchasers are the King, the Begums or Princesses, and other distinguished ladies of the Seraglio. If any Omrah's wife happens to have a handsome daughter, she never fails to accompany her mother that she may be seen by the King and become known to the Begums. The charm of the fair is the most ludicrous manner in which the King makes his bargains, frequently disputing for the value of a penny. He pretends that the good lady cannot possibly be in earnest, that the article is much too dear, that it is not equal to what he can find elsewhere, and that positively he will give no more than such a price. The woman on the other hand endeavours to sell to the best advantage, and when the King perseveres in offering what she considers too little money, high words frequently ensue, and she fearlessly tells him that he is a worthless trader (*un marchand de neige*), a person ignorant of the value of merhandise; that her articles are too good for him, and that he had better go where he can suit himself better, and similar jocular expressions. The Begums betray, if possible, a still greater anxiety to be served cheaply; high words are heard on every side, and the loud and scurrilous quarrels of the sellers and buyers create a complete farce. But, sooner or later they agree upon the price; the Princesses as well as the King buy right and left, pay in ready money, and often slip out of their hands, as if by accident, a few gold instead of silver *roupies*, intended as a compliment to the fair merchant or her pretty daughter. The present is received in the same unconscious manner, and the whole ends amidst witty jests and good-humour."[1]

It is probable that Moghul civilisation was always something of an exotic in India; the Court talked Persian, a foreign language, and was continually recruited by fresh arrivals from Central Asia; it is at least doubtful whether its culture materially influenced the people of the country. But had Indian history followed the orderly evolution of progress in Europe, it might in time have widened down and become truly national. But this was not to be. After the death of Aurangzib in 1707, the great edifice of Moghul government tottered to its fall, and the realm upreared by Akbar and Shah Jehan "reeled back into the beast and was no more." There is in all history no more pitiful reading than the tale of the Great Anarchy in which India weltered during the eighteenth century. Afghan freebooters descended from the north and burned and harried the country; Marathas pillaged and levied blackmail, leaving behind them a blackened waste where villages and crops had stood; they spread such terror over India that the

[1] 'Travels in the Mogul Empire,' by Francois Bernier. P. 273. London: Constable & Co.

mothers in Bengal stayed the crying of their children by saying, "Hush! the Marathas are coming." What the larger armies left was destroyed by gangs of brigands and marauders. Unable to make a living by honest work, every man with a stout heart took to the trade of arms. Whole tribes who would have been content enough to till their ancestral fields, had they been left unmolested, took to freebooting and roamed over India as companies of Free Lances. The land went out of cultivation, the country was depopulated, and wild beasts multiplied in the untilled waste. Civilisation went back with frightful rapidity. Nor is this surprising. We know how the Thirty Years' War put back civilisation in Germany, and that it took her two hundred years to regain the place in Europe from which that comparatively short spell of anarchy precipitated her. "The very pattern of the chairs on which the peasant sat," says Dr Gardiner, "of the vessels out of which he ate and drank, assumed a ruder appearance than they had borne before the war. In all ranks life was meaner, poorer, harder than it had been at the beginning of the century." If such was the effect of the Thirty Years' War on Germany, is it surprising that confusion prolonged to almost thrice that length wellnigh annihilated the civilisation of India! At the opening of the nineteenth century India lay in the insensibility of exhaustion, and the first task of the new Government was to nurse her back to life and then carry onward the civilising work of the Moghuls. To realise the progress which India achieved in the nineteenth century we must not measure her upward march from the height which she had reached under Shahjehan or Aurangzib, but from the depth to which she had fallen during the Great Anarchy. The progress she has made since that calamitous epoch is, in my opinion, the most marvellous thing that has happened in Asia in the last hundred years: no wonder that when her King Rode to Delhi at the end of last year he gave to India a message of hope.

AN IMPRESSIONIST VIEW OF CANADA.

First impressions are certainly open to the charge of being superficial. They must necessarily be so. But, all the same, they give us something that we shall never see again. The contrasts with our former experiences are more marked. Essential features, which familiarity will subsequently blur, catch our attention more forcibly, just as the idiosyncrasies of a new acquaintance leave an impress which will not return after years of intimacy. And if they fail to penetrate below the surface, they should also be free from prejudice. Longer study forces us to take sides in outstanding controversies; it immerses us in strong sympathies and antipathies. Human nature prevents us from preserving for long an attitude of impartiality.

In the case of the Dominion of Canada, if the superficial view is open to mistakes, it is also free from the burden of responsibility. We may do our best to form a conception of a nation in the making, without having to take a part in its development. It is not ours to solve its problems or to direct its destinies. That has passed beyond our power. It is not for us to measure its independence, to prescribe its constitution, or to guide its footsteps in the path of expansion. We can only watch, and do our best to harmonise our action with its progress, and to adjust our relations with these cousins overseas.

The first lesson comes to us long before we reach the shores of the St Lawrence. The ship that carried us across the Atlantic carried also some thousand emigrants, who were to make their home in Canada; and no great discrimination was required to enable any one to judge their quality. The loafer and the street-corner man were conspicuous by their absence. The citizens to be enrolled in the new nation were, in the main, sound specimens of British manhood. England and Scotland may be richer in the future for the strength of our kinsmen beyond the seas, but for the present they are spending of their best to help to build up that strength. We were assured that our fellow-passengers, who were going to Canada to stay, were but an ordinary average specimen of the weekly contingent that leaves our shores. One hears often in Canada of the wastrel who arrives there under the delusion that the weakling who has failed in the old country may find a place in the more strenuous life across the Atlantic. That sort do little credit to the old country, and a sorry fate awaits them in the new. But we can only say that there was little evidence of their presence in the contingent that sailed with us.

Many approach Canada by the quicker passage to Boston

or New York, and then through the States. For ourselves, we hold that the longer route by the St Lawrence serves as a more dramatic introduction to the Dominion. We scarcely regretted even the delay of thirty hours, due to dense fog, when it was compensated by the superb view of a countless fleet of icebergs, numerous beyond any recent experience,—an array which would have spelt disaster had there been any rashness of navigation, but which, when the fog cleared, and they shone out in brilliant sunlight, fully paid us for the dreary hours, broken only by the wail of the syren. The passage through Belle Isle Straits, with the Labrador coast, recalling memories of Shetland, forms a fitting portal to the vast stretches of lonely forest which succeed it; and the voyage up the St Lawrence is an experience which it would be hard to match. It attunes the mind to that sense of largeness which gradually penetrates one's consciousness, and is perhaps the most enduring impression left, after we have journeyed through Canada from sea to sea. It culminates fitly in the splendid vision of Quebec, with the Heights of Abraham dominating the wide expanse of river and of land.

We had heard much of Canadian hospitality, and it was not long before we found that description had for once fallen short of the truth. We learned to know that the strenuous worker of Montreal never grudges the interruption to business which gives him the opportunity of welcoming a stranger and making that stranger feel at home. We have only to see, as an absolute outsider, a very little of the vast stream of enterprise, to be struck by the same sense of expansion in action which has already captured our eye in the landscape. In a small and unpretentious room we find the central machinery which is controlling vast commercial undertakings, stretching from New Brunswick to Vancouver; regulating the financial supply which is to give motive power; directing enterprise into new channels, and accurately gauging the forces that sway the varying tides of trade over an immeasurable field. Politics are here a subsidiary interest. A nation is growing before our eyes. No party shibboleths can here exercise a dominating influence. The national life is moving forward in a mighty current, and no political prejudice can be allowed to stay its progress.

But this does not mean that men are deaf to political appeals or indifferent to political ideals. Their very welcome tells us of the feeling of brotherhood, and reflects the passionate conviction that our interests and theirs are indissolubly united. It is easy to perceive how deep is the impression of the victory at the polls of last September, when disaster was turned aside, and when the specious policy that we now know—as we before suspected—was to lead to annexation to the United States, was finally crushed. In that victory, and in the

deep-rooted conviction which achieved it, we believe that the central pivot is to be found on which Canadian politics will turn. If it fails us, the blame will be due to the shifty tactics and the purblind vision of party prejudice at home.

For the moment we leave politics alone. The ready warmth of hospitality makes us feel at home. An essential unity of political aim cements the bond; and amongst those whose outlook is so wide, and whose experience of the old country is so full, as are those of the leading Canadian citizens, one scarcely realises that one is three thousand miles away from all familiar scenes. We are, as it were, guests in the house of an easy, an accommodating, a courteous host. The novelty of conditions only slowly impresses us. But in time the man in the street and in the train makes himself felt. It would be easy, as his peculiarities strike us, to feel repelled by what one later recognises to be the faults of his qualities. Distinctions of class may be condemned as relics of craven servility, but they do contribute to the smooth working of society. The spirit of independence may be worthy of all praise, but its constant assertion is none the less apt to savour of *brusquerie* and to introduce friction into social intercourse. We have to be on our guard against those insular prejudices which make us unduly sensitive to something jarring in the ordinary traffic of the street. Such sensitiveness is an ever-present danger, and its consequences may be worse than a little ridicule incurred by ourselves as individuals. Only a very little observation teaches us that the roughness of ordinary intercourse is merely superficial. It is the necessary accompaniment of a vigorous and always strenuous life, which develops strong personalities, and declines the circumlocution of conventional courtesy. To resent it unduly shows a lack of the sense of proportion, and perhaps an artificial eschewing of it on the part of the average Canadian might savour not a little of affectation. It is true that an ordinary inquiry in the street often meets, at first, with a curt reply. But the next sentence may show a fund of kindly helpfulness that would be rare in the ordinary intercourse of English life. The Good Samaritan may often by his manner disguise his good intentions to the wayfarer, but they are none the less effective in result. We must not forget, too, that while strenuous lives are apt to set little store upon conventional courtesies, deep-seated suspicions and antipathies are still more apt to develop a certain tartness of demeanour. Canada has her own animosities, which her history has taught her, and she bears the imprint of these upon her manners.

One of these, which it is idle to ignore, is the unbridgable division between the English and the French population. Religion has much to do with this. Language has still more. But temperament has most of

all. It is hard to say what the political aim of the French-Canadian is. His attachment to the great names in the history of the past may count for something,[1] but it is doubtful whether it goes very far with the great mass of the French population. He cannot long for annexation to France or to the United States, because under neither Power would his Church be likely to retain anything like her present privileges and her absolute immunity from any reforming legislation. But the Frenchman has no effective share in the real prosperity of the country, and plays no considerable part in her progress. To the average Frenchman of the poorer class, Canada's strenuous life offers no attraction. He seems to have an instinctive genius for political intrigue, and he wields a disproportionate influence in the minor affairs of administration which is often accorded to him from very weariness, resulting from the strain and stress that burden the more strenuous body of Canadian citizens. By a strange perversity, he seems to find occupation rather in perplexing the clear course of Canadian politics, than in striving for any settled and definite aim of his own. In the dangerous balance, which accident has given to him, between rival political parties, lies the greatest peril to Canada. We would be far from ascribing such perversities either to the whole of the Roman Catholic community or to the best class of Frenchmen in Canada. But they undoubtedly represent, on its bad side, the influence of a great mass of the French population. And the evil which these perversities produce has its effect upon their long-suffering Anglo-Saxon fellow-citizens, who suffer from its consequences, and are not unnaturally impatient at its manifestations.

Even after making all possible allowances for the bewildering rapidity of growth of the Canadian cities, it can scarcely be said that municipal administration is the sphere in which efficiency is most conspicuous. The paving of the streets in Quebec and Montreal would not bring credit to an insignificant provincial town in England; and the reports of the inquiry now proceeding into the water-supply of Ottawa, and the causes of the recent typhoid epidemic, afford very ugly reading. Let it be noted that a very large proportion of the extensive property of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada is exempt from municipal taxation. But in municipal affairs, the influence of the lower-class Frenchman is altogether out of proportion to his interest in the prosperity of the city or his contribution towards its burdens. In Mon-

[1] Perhaps we need not concern ourselves much with the fact, which is indubitably true, that a visitor might easily traverse the streets of Quebec without learning that such a man as Wolfe ever lived. All the names in evidence are those of Frenchmen.

treal, for instance, the paving of some of the streets in the wealthiest quarters is wretched compared with that of the streets in the poorer French quarters towards the east of the city. A Board of Control has done something to improve conditions, and might be expected to do more; but its existence is now threatened by those whose malpractices it might check. The presence of that evil weed of American growth, commonly known as "graft," is openly admitted, and just as openly condemned by all the better citizens. To some extent it is due to the absence of a leisured class, who could devote time and business capacity to municipal business without hope of profit. Canadian energy may be trusted to extirpate it in time. But meanwhile it provokes a sense of irksomeness and irritation which lectures from the outside would only aggravate. And the fact is indubitable that the part which a certain class of the French population bears in it, intensifies the jealousy between the diverse racial elements of which Canada is composed. The broad features of the situation are easily grasped. An essential loyalty to Imperial ideas, a deep-rooted sympathy with Anglo-Saxon ideals, is being perpetually jarred by the jealousy and intrigue of an alien racial section. It is no wonder that the mood of Canada becomes self-assertive, irritated by doubts of its loyalty, and impatient of criticism that takes no account of the vexing elements that disturb its peace.

The same impression becomes more strong as we move westward. Journeying from Montreal, when we have passed through the picturesque playgrounds of the city, we proceed through hundreds of miles of stunted forest, in which pine-trees push themselves up between huge boulders with a tenacity of life that seems wonderful. It is a broad barrier between Eastern Canada and the new expansion towards the West, and it is beyond that barrier that the most vigorous and enterprising life of the continent is making itself a home. Some day it may yield hidden treasures and form a stepping-stone to the West. Now it is only the long tenantless tract across which Canadian energy has pushed itself. Once over that, we break out upon the Lakes and the busy hives of Port Arthur and Fort-William, and presently find ourselves by the Lake of the Woods,—the playground of an entirely new industrial centre. The next stage brings us to the neck of the traffic between East and West, —that marvellously thriving city of yesterday, Winnipeg. It is there that a new Canada opens to our view,—vigorous, alert, clear-eyed to the vision that lies before her, having all but shaken herself free from the retarding and embarrassing intrigues and racial difficulties that have encumbered her path.

It is there that we begin to recognise the marvellous fore-

sight of those pioneers of railway enterprise who saw that the true line of development was from east to west, and not from north to south. Our colonial history is too often the story of opportunities missed, of discernment sorely lacking, of purblind groping after some aim not clearly recognised. Those who planned the Canadian Pacific Railway were the men who shaped the destinies of Canada, and defeated schemes of American annexation thirty years before the real struggle came. They were statesmen in the best sense of the word—quick to conceive large schemes, and daring to execute them. They have reaped their reward, and have given not a little reality to the common saying that "the C. P. R. is Canada." This is not the place to appraise the feats of engineering skill in the construction of the railway, or to comment upon its financial prospects. That must be left to experts. But no one who visits the railway yards at Winnipeg, who observes the massive strength of its permanent way, and hears the almost unceasing thunder of its huge trains,[1] passing each other in constant succession, can doubt that behind this mighty organisation there work sleepless energy and superb strategic skill. Its forward march is directed by a staff as loyal as it is quick in intelligence. But it has been one of the blessings of Canada that the men who created this marvellous strategical feat of railway traffic, established a tradition of financial purity as marked as their unerring foresight and their unswerving boldness of action. They have opened a new path, but they have created no monopoly; and Canada has not to fear, like America, that railway development may become a convenient engine of political corruption. Against such a catastrophe the character of the pioneers, repeated in the traditions maintained by their successors, will, we are confident, be a sufficient guarantee, even if there were not the further security of healthy rivalry.

In Winnipeg we have a thriving and bustling centre of diversified prosperity—a landmark on the highway from east to west. Only about a generation old, she already stretches her arms over miles of country covered by handsome buildings. With the usual Canadian foresight, she has secured in the broad acreage of her Public Park a permanent possession of rare beauty, and an invaluable lung for the crowded population that must soon be gathered in her streets.

Leaving Winnipeg and Manitoba, we pass into the prairie districts of Saskatchewan and Alberta, with marked idiosyncrasies of their own. There, along the line of the railway tracks, and away to the north towards Edmonton, stretch the wheat-producing districts. It is only natural that their chief aim should be the acquisition of a ready market; and pos-

[1] A train over half a mile in length is not an infrequent sight on the C. P. R.

sibly this may give rise to tendencies towards a line of policy different from the prevailing trend of Canadian feeling. It is towards these provinces that emigration from the United States chiefly spreads; and it would be rash for a stranger to say whether the new settlers, who are acquiring Canadian nationality, will be moved mainly by sympathy with their new fellow-citizens or by aspirations towards a closer union with the land which they have left. At this moment the political complexion of these two provinces is sharply distinguished from the provinces to the east and to the west of them. But they are divided by no racial bar and by no bitter memories; and from all accounts the settlers from over the border find in the impartial administration of the law a security that is not unwelcome, and that may weld them closer to the nation which they have voluntarily adopted. The one essential is the development of access to a paying market, and that ought soon to be secured by the unresting energy of the various competing railways. The route to the east has been successfully established; it remains only to increase its stream so as to compete successfully with tempting routes that may be opened to the south.

Leaving the rich prairie-lands, we mount from Calgary towards the gigantic barrier of the Rockies and the Selkirk Mountains that separate these from British Columbia. To carry the railway over that barrier—a few years ago passable only by the scanty convoys that could labour over the apology for a track that pierced its gullies and scaled its precipices—was an achievement of indomitable courage, and of splendid confidence in the development of the country. All the seeming probabilities were with those who prophesied bankruptcy for any such scheme. Hundreds of miles had to be traversed from which no produce was to be hoped for, and where no profits were to be found. The inspiring force was the statesmanlike ideal of connecting the links in the chain that was to make the West one with the East. In that faith the pioneers worked, and it is their fidelity to that faith that is now reaping its reward. If the finger of the compass continues to point truly, if no disloyalty deflects it, and no callous lack of sympathy from England undermines the faith, that reward will surely be a rich one for Canada and for the Empire.

To attempt to gauge the future capabilities of British Columbia, or to measure her resources, would require investigation far beyond the scope of the present article. The lumber trade, now the chief source of her wealth, is one which time, in the absence of thrifty foresight and prudent renewal, must exhaust; and the fishing industry is not one on which reliance can be placed as a staple of prosperity. A fascinating catalogue of fortunes rapidly made by speculation in Real Estate is, no doubt, matter for congratulation to the

lucky speculators, but indicates no increase of national wealth. But there are other symptoms that presage well for British Columbia's future, and that promise to make her a sound asset for Canada and the Empire. New industries are gradually but surely coming to take part in her development along with the lumber trade. Mineral wealth is there waiting for development. The access to the Pacific, which opens a new portal to the East, must stir new ambitions, and open a vista of new possibilities. The prizes will not be gained without severe competition, but the energy to meet that competition is in abundant evidence. It is no little matter that Imperialist loyalty flourishes nowhere better than in British Columbia, that farthest landmark of Empire, where the West once more meets the East.

It is a dramatic meeting, and it is set in dramatic surroundings. As we drop gradually down from the mountain barrier that we have crossed and pass through the gloomy portals of gigantic forests, we feel that we have come to a new land. Light and air and sunshine burst upon us, and it is only where the forest almost meets the sea that we find that its domain has been seriously invaded, and that its advanced sentinels have been mowed down to give room for streets and towering sky-scrapers. There is nothing to suggest the fact that only six-and-twenty years ago primeval forest held the whole region in its sway where now broad streets and electric tramways and reeking chimneys and the long façades of huge factories are pushing their obtrusive presence, heedless of its solemn dignity. Only here and there we are reminded of the rapid transformation, by seeing the gaunt remnants of colossal pines sticking up close by the wall of a freshly-risen pile of ten-storey buildings. These remnants are like hunted ghosts, gibbering at the profanation of their secular mysteries.

Here, as it were, Canada has come to the boundary of her domain—a boundary that opens long vistas of new development. The present feverish haste to make rapid profits out of land speculation, which adds nothing to the store of national wealth, will surely pass. Already prudent schemes are being started which will prevent the denudation of the country by lumber export. The abundant store of energy which is to be found in the ever-increasing stream of enterprising immigrants, towards which the rest of the world is making rich contributions, will assuredly develop manufactures under very favourable conditions. And we have at least this security, that British Columbia is solid in its loyalty to the Imperial ideal, and that the most distant link in the chain that binds together British North America in fidelity to one flag is also one of the strongest, and the least likely to be snapped by any centrifugal force. It is not without significance that

the tone and temper of the citizens of Vancouver and of Victoria are as characteristically British as any that we can meet in the three thousand miles from Montreal to the Pacific.

The British traveller is dull and unsympathetic who does not catch from the journey a new sense of Imperial unity, who does not learn something of the problems that lie before the Dominion, and feel some sympathy with the difficulties she has to meet. On the question of annexation with America, Canada has pronounced her judgment once for all. She knows how she was tempted by tricky promises; she is the stronger for her refusal of the bait; and she has learned since what were the motives that lay behind the temptation, and has seen the ulterior aims roughly and cynically proclaimed. Canada will not knowingly surrender her birthright as a partner in the British Empire for any Will-o'-the-wisp of commercial advantage. But none the less there exists a more insidious danger, because it is less observed. Is the visitor quite deceived who fancies that there is some growth of Americanising sentiment spreading itself amongst certain sections of Canadians? They are ready to resist avowed political schemes, and annexation, as such, is abhorrent to the mass of Canadians. But are they quick to discern that assimilation of temperament in certain quarters which may work its results as certainly, though with less chance of detection? Is it wise to encourage tendencies, in the younger generation especially, that may create sympathies antagonistic to the real trend of Canadian nationality? The subject is one too dangerous for dogmatism or advice: we at most can hazard a suggestion. Canada has a personality of her own, which is too valuable to be exchanged for an easy adoption of American types, American ideals, American fashions.

But the real problem for Canada undoubtedly is, the antagonistic racial feeling which has its roots deep in certain sections of the French population. There lies the *crux* of the Canadian politician. We recognise, with all respect, the presence of divergent parties in Canadian politics, and we would be sorry to attack the essential loyalty of either. But that section of French feeling to which we refer is essentially antagonistic to the prevailing spirit of the country. It perverts and twists to its own evil ends the divergences of party politics. It imposes a bar and an impediment, so far as it can, to any great scheme of Imperial consolidation. It finds its profit in keeping old sores open, in reviving controversies already settled, and in stirring up imaginary grievances in the minds of the most ignorant of the population.

The stupendous question of to-day, alike for England and for Canada, is the maintenance of the Imperial control of the sea. The only question which links us together by the tie of

vital interest is the policing of the highway of the ocean. Once that highway loses its security, the knell of British as of Canadian prosperity is sounded. That both countries should combine in the task of defending it is the essential guarantee of their partnership.

But to any such scheme that French section to which we have referred is ready to show the most relentless hostility, and to back that hostility by the most flagrant misrepresentation, framed to catch the ears of the unthinking *habitant*, who is taught that a naval contribution means the kidnapping of his sons, who are to be shipped across the ocean to fight England's battles.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has at all times met with wholehearted welcome from the British nation, and it is no business of ours to interfere with the party politics of Canada or to obtrude our sympathy on either side. We can only express our fervent hope that Sir Wilfrid Laurier may continue to command that welcome by the patriotism that is above party. We would not have presumed even to express that hope, were it not that some of his most recent utterances have stirred deep hostility in Canada, and have given to ourselves strong searchings of heart. Reciprocity with the United States has surely been sufficiently exposed to render it unwise for any Canadian leader to revive it as Sir Wilfrid Laurier has done. Still less can it be expedient at this moment to inflame the bitterness of racial antipathy by appeals to prejudice.

A grave task lies before Mr Borden and his colleagues, in deciding how Canada may contribute to the great scheme of Imperial Defence. We would be disposed to make little account of exact proportion, and not to be too careful as regards any balance on one side or the other in the budget of expense. But we cannot but urge that naval defence must rest upon a single scheme, and that subdivisions and divergent counsels spell disaster: and further, that organisation during peace must be the basis of organisation for war. It may not be amiss to suggest that practical experience would soon tell against any such *morcellement*, and that the *personnel* of a Canadian navy would soon protest against any scheme which confined them to Canadian waters, and bounded their ambition by the command of a Canadian contingent.

We are unwilling, however, to say anything which may increase the difficulty of the task which now faces the Canadian Government. We have full confidence in the patriotism and in the Imperial instincts of Mr Borden. But two things are essential to his success, and they must be supplied by His Majesty's Government at home. In the first place, Canada must be given a voice in consultations upon Imperial policy, in proportion to her contribution. This must be given in no grudging spirit. No specious offers of con-

fidential talk, after decisions have been taken, can meet the fair demand of the Dominion. To decide how this share is to be given is a task which demands statesmanship, but which ought not to be beyond the powers of far-sighted prudence. To lay the foundations of such a scheme of confederation requires qualities far different from those that have been exhibited in abortive schemes for partitioning the United Kingdom into an ill-assorted heptarchy.

Secondly, Mr Borden and his colleagues must be supplied with ample information as to the real dangers that threaten the Empire, so as to justify the proposals which he may feel it to be his duty to lay before the Canadian Parliament. It is not sufficient to hint at dangers, and not to give to these dangers the full and explicit documentary expression which the Canadian Cabinet has a right to demand. The British Cabinet, as it is now constituted, has forced us to be suspicious of its motives and dubious as to its tactics. If, from any fancied tactical gain, or from any sordid temptation to embarrass the Canadian Cabinet in meeting the party led by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, our present Government were lacking in that essential frankness, such shiftiness would add a heavy load of responsibility to that for which they will one day have to answer.

Unfortunately we have very distinct evidence that, amongst a certain section of the Radical party, such a dastardly policy would be welcomed. In an organ of the present Government, which reflects the worst tendencies of that party, 'The Nation,' we read as follows (Sept. 7, 1912):—

"We do not know what are the precise proposals about the Navy that Mr Borden has taken back with him to Canada, but we do very strongly urge that Mr Churchill cannot and must not put the Liberal Government into antagonism with the Liberal Party in Canada. . . . It is no part of any Liberal Government's duty to assist in furthering a policy which is essentially Conservative. . . . It would not be impartiality, but levity, to approve of a Liberal Navy policy when it is put forward by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and when something like an opposite policy is put forward by his Conservative successor, to approve that too, and help him to develop it."

Let us consider what this means. It is a plain declaration that the duty of an English Government is not to accept the Government placed in power by Canadian votes, but to undermine its influence and to thwart its aims in order to further Radical views. Treasonable suggestion could go to no more daring lengths, nor could party spite evince tactics more despicable. We shall have to watch whether such suggestions, and such tactics, receive any countenance from those who, unfortunately, hold for the moment the fortunes of the Empire in their hands.

A PATH TO REALITY.

THE grave resolution of Ulster to refuse, in all circumstances and at all hazards, the gift of Home Rule, which is no gift, has done something more than kill a monstrous Bill. It has shown us a path to reality. For years we have been bidden by our demagogues to live upon words. Rhetoric has done the work of thought and act. Silly catchwords, inspiring vague and evil passions, have been considered the chief duty of statesmanship. Law and honour, the decencies of life, the future of the country, have been gaily put up to auction and knocked down to the men who seemed to command the largest number of votes. For those who have any regard for political honesty and the pride of England the time which has elapsed since the fraudulent passage of the Parliament Bill has seemed like a nightmare. The nightmare is dissipated at last. Ulster has shown us a path to reality.

If Mr Asquith were to carry out the intention, of which he boasts, and place Home Rule upon the Statute Book, Ulster would forcibly reject it. It declines to be driven out of the Union. It will not initiate rebellion; it will oppose it when it is thrust most wickedly upon it. Were Home Rule passed, it would be passed only and solely by Mr Redmond and his henchmen, by men who are pledged frankly and openly, everywhere save in the House of Commons, to set no limit to the aspirations of their "nation," to be content with nothing save complete independence. In the task of imposing this revolution upon Ulster, England has had no share. The largest party in the House of Commons is united in opposition to its provisions. In brief, Ulster is to be enslaved by no other votes than the votes of the Redmondites and Molly Maguires, her declared enemies. If for an hour she submitted to so gross a tyranny she would lose the respect of honest men. She will not submit, and in determining thus to defend her honour and the liberty of her folk she has lifted our politics from the pit of verbose triviality into which they had fallen.

For it is triviality and triviality alone which stamps the words — they dare no deeds—of our statesmen. Mr Asquith is an advocate and no more. He speaks obediently to his brief. He is careful not to go beyond his instructions. In defending Mr Redmond and Mr Patrick Ford he quibbles like an attorney. Two days before Parliament met he addressed his constituents, and his talk was not of Home Rule but of tactics. Tactics, tactics, it is always tactics which

engross him, and when he is tired of admiring his own conduct of Mr Redmond's case, he falls heavily upon the tactics of his opponents. Principles, enthusiasms, ideals are not of the smallest interest to him. He does not understand them; he makes no attempt to expound or to criticise them. He credits the Unionist Party with the same ambition which animates him, of playing the attorney. And thus, with the "case" ever before his eyes, he charges them with "political blunders." Mr Chamberlain's campaign in favour of protection was a political blunder. To throw out the Budget of 1909 he considers "the most colossal error of tactics in our time." It is barren stuff, to be sure, such as no Prime Minister has ever yet served up as politics. And it is barren, because Mr Asquith, looking only at his brief, forgets that Mr Chamberlain is a man of strong principle, and that the House of Lords refused to vote for the Budget of 1909, because it put its duty before the indecent hope of a tactical advantage.

Still, in obedience to his instructions, Mr Asquith declares that the claim of Ulster not to be expelled from the Union is "a negation of the first of the root principles of democratic government." Were we living under a democracy we might discuss the question. But Mr Asquith knows as well as we know, though it is not stated in his brief, that the Parliament Bill destroyed the democracy. The root principles of democracy, whatever they may be, do not require unquestioning obedience to a tyrannical Convention, which deliberates in secret and does not permit a full discussion of its decrees. What has happened was clearly foreseen by all who had studied the history of politics. The abolition of the House of Lords, together with the payment of members, meant the total extinction of the House of Commons. The Cabinet, having purchased the absolute fidelity of its followers by its bribe of £400 a-head, believes itself supreme in the country. And Mr Asquith has not merely ensured the support of a slavish majority, he has enunciated the new theory that an Opposition which desires the extinction of a Bill has no right to discuss it. The guillotine and the kangaroo are not sufficient. They do not impose total silence. So the claim to pass Bills without comment must have its moral sanction, and nobody henceforth may attempt to amend a Bill unless he has first pronounced a formal acceptance of its principle. Did that fallacy, we wonder, grow at the root of democracy? Mr Bonar Law, at anyrate, had no difficulty in uprooting it. "I think," said he, "unlike Mr Asquith, that, after all, the country, and not the House of Commons, is the final Court of Appeal; and I claim that legitimate discussion, which does do what he says we have done—does show the absurdity of the Bill,—is as

necessary as any other form of discussion."

As we have said, there is an unreality in every word spoken by Mr Asquith. Mr Lloyd George approaches no more nearly to the facts of life. In the speech which he delivered in the House of Commons on the Home Rule Bill, he showed himself a mere strayling from the Mile End. He was pleased to be funny, to try his hand at the making of jests, and, like Sir Edward Carson, we "have not the least ambition to follow the right honourable gentleman in his foolery." He is as little capable of understanding the gravity of the situation as the advocate who is his leader. How should he, when his Iberian blood forbids him a sense of humour? At the very moment when he is doing his best to gag the only house of deliberation that is left us, he makes a speech against political animus. "I should be very sorry," he says, "to see the nation divided into two irreconcilable camps, with an unbridgable chasm between them, never co-operating as citizens for any common purpose. When political animus saturates our blood to that extent, you may depend upon it there is no health in us." It is never an edifying spectacle to look upon the devil reproving sin. But it must be clear to every one that if the nation is divided into two irreconcilable camps, as we devoutly hope it is, that division is mainly the work of the evangelist of Limehouse. Mr Lloyd George deliberately set out to create hatred, and with his trick of rhetoric to aid him he has succeeded. There is more ill-feeling in the country at the present moment than ever before, and the ill-feeling has not been mitigated by the secret inquiry into the land inaugurated by Mr Lloyd George, and trounced as it deserved to be trounced in the House of Commons by Mr Rawlinson. To accept the challenge is the first duty of the Unionist party. Ill-feeling has been forced upon us, and we accept it. When we see our liberties infringed, and our country involved in ruin, merely that Mr Asquith may remain in office, and that Mr Lloyd George may pursue the career of self-interest sketched in a recent biography, there is no space or excuse for good-feeling. Any other country, save England, which suffers long and deeply, would have been in open rebellion long ago.

The reason why England is not in open rebellion is that in a dim way she sees the unreality of it all. Even if the Home Rule Bill passes the House of Commons, as Mr Redmond has ordered that it shall, it will still be a long way from coming into operation. In the first place, it will not carry with it the authority of the House of Lords; in the second, it will not be approved by the country. At the best, it will seem a maimed, truncated thing—a thing brought into being by the casual vote of the odd man, who happens to be Mr Redmond, and sus-

tained only by the bought support of members who entered the House as free men, and have not asked their constituents' permission to accept emolument at Mr Asquith's hand. After all, the Radicals may use their trickery to thrust new measures upon the country. But no measure can become a reality except by the goodwill and forbearance of those upon whom it is thrust, and this plain truth our Convention, exulting in its hired majority, is apt to forget. In the admirable speech which Mr Austen Chamberlain delivered in the closure debate, a speech of real force and fire, he set the argument in an unanswerable light. "Honourable members opposite," said he, "who were against all wars to defend our country from foreign Powers, cheerfully engaged in a civil struggle infinitely more dangerous and pitiable, the end of which no man could foresee. He did not believe that in such circumstances public opinion would tolerate this Bill being passed. But if it were passed in these circumstances and by these means, then the law had no sanctity for him: he recognised no moral authority behind it. It was not a law passed by constitutional means; it was a revolution carried by fraud, and to be enforced by the use of fraud. It could not last. They might do immeasurable damage; they might incur the guilt of blood; and their Bill would perish before it was a year old."

Nothing has been more conspicuous in the debates of Parliament than the superiority in argument of the Unionist speakers, unless it is the growing exasperation of the Radicals. Messrs Bonar Law and Austen Chamberlain and Sir Edward Carson were unanswered and unanswerable. The strength of their case has been obvious in every speech delivered. They are masters of their subject, and as they are not the slaves of "tactics," they dare to say what they think. On the other side there is a mere fumbling after common jests. Mr Churchill is obviously uneasy. Though he votes as he is told, he is unable to make up his mind. Ulster appals him for a moment; then he blows on his knuckles and goes into the right lobby. His suggestion that there should be no county without its parliament, paid members and all, brought him into instant disgrace, and by this time, no doubt, he wishes he had never said it. At any rate, he has not acted upon it, and that is something to the good. We still await his secession without any uneasiness. "He has had a comparatively short public career," said Mr Bonar Law of him, "but it has been varied, and perhaps you think it is impossible that he can have any surprise in store for us. You are mistaken. There is still a surprise that he might give us. It would stagger humanity. I really thought it was coming. That thunderbolt will come when . . . the first Lord of the Admiralty shows that he is

ready on any question to sacrifice his ambition to his convictions." The thunderbolt will not fall; humanity will not be staggered; but Mr Churchill's position in his party is sensibly weakened.

Mr Lloyd George has suffered in his influence more gravely even than Mr Churchill. No man has courted popularity more ardently than he. It has been the sole god of his idolatry, for popularity is a way to success, and a foolish biographer and a too confiding brother have revealed to us the Chancellor's worship of success. And his popularity has passed from him like a pleasant dream. The Insurance Bill has made him enemies in every parish, and as though that were not enough, he has taken a secret agitation concerning the land upon his already bent shoulders. Had he acquired a rudimentary knowledge of England he would have refrained his hand, but he has blundered into an attempt to reconstruct what is to him a foreign country, and he is paying the penalty. Meanwhile his great meeting at Swindon, called, we were told, by thousands of rural labourers, is indefinitely postponed, and it is unlikely that he has endeared himself to a distracted Cabinet.

The Home Rule Bill is not the only important measure which is to be pushed through this session, with as little discussion as guillotines and kangaroos allow. The Welsh Church must be pilfered, and a Reform bill be thrust, without discussion, upon the country. And thus we see how in another respect the Parliament Bill has failed. Two years of congested legislation must be followed, we suppose, by two years of inaction, while the bills are maturing in a kind of hot-house. All these now before the House will be rotten before they are ripe—of that we may be well assured. But the complete failure of a bill, which was passed by trickery, cannot be consoling to the consciences of our Ministers, however well its passage served the turn of Mr Redmond. At the same time we cannot deny that Mr Asquith may pass his bills if he will. Having stifled debate, and drilled his 400-pounders, he can register the decrees of his mysterious committee. His bills will be thrown out by the House of Lords, and perhaps he will take the prudent course of resigning before he has pushed them through thrice. Meanwhile discussion would not be profitable, even if it were permitted. The Opposition have pleaded their cause with unexampled eloquence and sincerity. In the dishonoured assembly which still bears the honourable name of the House of Commons, they may no longer perform their duty. What then is left them but to abandon the House to its gag, guillotine, and kangaroo, or make their voices heard in the country? They have done their best; they have proved their willingness to revise the legislation now before the

House, and they have been told that they have no right to comment upon bills which they wish to destroy. Let, then, the Tory members shake the dust of Westminster from their feet, and warn the people on every platform of England what the Radicals have in store for them. If they are not allowed to debate, at least they can prepare the country for the next General Election, and let what was once the Mother of Parliaments echo dumbly to the lame sophistries of Mr Asquith and the unrehearsed indiscretions of his Irish Secretary.

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CONTENTS.

How General Isaac Brock Saved Canada. By Prof. Oman, 733

From the Outposts, ... 751

Rammu. By C. G. C. T.

A Day's Training. By N. B. De Lancey Forth.

"——and a Perle in the Myddes." By Eleanor Farjeon, 761

Backwynds of the Blue Ridge, ... 786

Traquair's Stalk. By "Linesman," . . . 797

Tales of the Mermaid Tavern. By Alfred Noyes, . 809

VII. *Flos Mercatorum.*—Part III.

Hocken and Hunken. A Tale of Troy. By "Q.," . 814

Test Match Cricket of 1912, ... 845

Musings without Method.—Benjamin Disraeli, . . 860

William Blackwood, ... 875

Index, ... 879

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HOW GENERAL ISAAC BROCK SAVED CANADA.

It is not always by big battalions that the British Empire has been extended or preserved: nor have generals whose names are well remembered always been the saviours of the State. This year we have been celebrating with justifiable pride the centenaries of Wellington's triumphs at Ciudad Rodrigo, at Badajoz, and at Salamanca, but how few of the subjects of George V. on this side of the Atlantic have remembered to praise the exploits of Isaac Brock and his gallant handful of British regulars and Canadian militia. We have noticed no memorial hitherto of their triumphs at Detroit and by the Falls of Niagara, which saved—it is no exaggeration to say—British North America, and determined the future course of all its history. There was a moment, in the autumn of 1812, when nothing seemed more possible than the complete vanishing of the Union Jack from the Great Western Continent.

The war of 1812-1815, between Great Britain and the United States, was one of the most dangerous crises of the British Empire. It ended in a compromise, and a restoration of the *status quo*, yet at its commencement its possibilities were incalculable. At the moment when President Madison declared war we were at the very crucial point of the great struggle with France. Our implacable enemy, Napoleon, had still an unshaken position—he had just marched out to his Russian expedition, but its disastrous termination was only foreseen by a very few long-sighted men. To the majority he still seemed a Colossus bestriding the Old World, and the stubborn resistance of Great Britain to his domination was regarded as forlorn obstinacy by all the Whig politicians, who kept denouncing the Peninsular War as a failure, and Wellington as a venturesome general doomed to ultimate ruin. To

such thinkers the declaration of war by the United States was the final blow which must overthrow the British Empire, —the "stab in the back," as it was sometimes called, which must be fatal to the combatant whose whole attention was absorbed in the endless and exhausting struggle with Bonaparte.

There was much truth in this view. Looking back to the state of Canada in 1812, it does not seem unreasonable that the Americans should have considered it an easy prey, or that British statesmen should have feared that by the end of the year there would be nothing left unconquered save Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. The United States had a compact population of seven millions at this time: in Lower Canada there were no more than 300,000 British subjects, and they mostly of French origin. In the newly settled Upper Canada there were but 80,000 souls scattered in the wilderness. The military possibilities of defence seemed hopeless: the Ministry at home had made up their minds that war might be averted, as it had been for the last six years, by prolonged negotiations, and by concessions to the Americans whenever their attitude became threatening. In 1811 they had adopted a pacific policy, and shown signs of yielding whenever pressed. That war would come at last they had not thought likely: the Government of the United States had possessed a good *casus belli* against Great Britain, and an equally good one against France, ever since the issue of the Berlin Decrees and the retaliatory "Orders in Council." That President Madison would suddenly strike, when all endeavours were being made to conciliate him, had till the last moment been considered improbable. Hence no efforts had been made to reinforce the garrison of Canada, which was at its lowest peace strength. To defend sixteen hundred miles of frontier there were in July 1812 just four battalions of regular troops (the 8th, 41st, 49th, and 100th regiments), one veteran battalion, another of permanent local troops called the Newfoundland Regiment, and two or three companies of artillery. The whole amounted to no more than 4450 men, scattered in forts and posts from the mouth of the St Lawrence to Saint Joseph on Lake Huron. This contemptible total could not be raised to a higher figure for many months, in those days of sailing-ships and slow communications. It would be far into the autumn before the few battalions that could be spared from the West Indies or Bermuda would appear—to send troops from Home would take longer still, and Great Britain was at this time almost drained dry of regular battalions; the last reinforcements to Wellington in Spain had brought the domestic garrison lower than it had been for many a year. It was small wonder, therefore, that President Madison and the war-

party in the United States considered that Canada was to be had for the taking, if only they chose to stretch forth the armed hand. They had disregarded the protests of a strong Opposition, which included nearly all the New England States, because they thought that success was inevitable, and that criticism would be silenced by the tidings that York, Montreal, and Quebec had all fallen before the first advance of their armies. Well aware of the weakness of their enemy, they forgot their own drawbacks, and John Calhoun, the eloquent Congressman from South Carolina, was only voicing the general opinion of the war-party when he assumed the prophetic mantle and assured the nation that "in four weeks from the time that a declaration of war is heard on our frontiers, the whole of Upper and a great part of Lower Canada will be in our possession."

The boast sounds like mere "spread-eagle" bombast when subsequent events are considered, but there was more in it than might be conceded by those who are merely wise after the event. The President and his party had been making their preparations; they had, six months before the war began, passed a bill for raising 25,000 additional regular troops, and the new regiments were already mustering. In April Congress had authorised the President to call out 100,000 State Militia if war should be declared. In May—a month before the British Minister was sent away from Washington—an army had begun to move up to the farther end of Lake Erie to outflank the British line of defence in Upper Canada. It was ready to strike when the signal came, and meanwhile the Governor at Quebec, Sir George Prevost, was wholly unable to make up his mind whether hostilities were probable or not, and was continually receiving despatches from London to inform him that all endeavours were being made to avert a breach with the United States by means of concessions, and that meanwhile no reinforcements were being got ready for his benefit. When one Government is secretly resolved to force on war, and the other doubts of the reality of the danger, and makes no adequate preparation to meet it, the party which knows its own mind has an immense advantage.

That Upper Canada was not overrun by the Americans immediately after the declaration of war on June 18, 1812, was due, humanly speaking, to three things. The first was that President Madison and his military advisers appear to have been wholly ignorant of the fact that large numbers of men collected at various distant points, unprovided with transport, and mostly untrained to arms, cannot be made into a field army at a moment's notice by a despatch from headquarters. The second was that the militia of Canada, whose very existence the Americans had

ignored in their schemes of conquest, and whose construction and equipment were as sketchy as that of the levies opposed to them, turned out to be a formidable fighting force, despite of their very modest strength. The third, and to us the most interesting point of the three, was that Upper Canada was at this moment in charge of a soldier of true military genius, one of those unsuspected leaders of men whom an emergency sometimes calls to light — Major-General Isaac Brock.

That Brock was a capable man, and an officer who knew how to make himself loved by his troops, was known to every one who had come into contact with him. That he was a heaven-sent strategist, a true organiser of victory, was a fact that could only emerge on the crucial occasion when he was put to the test. His career down to 1812 had given him no chance of showing the heights to which he could rise in the moment of necessity. Born of an old Guernsey stock in 1769—in the same twelvemonth that saw both Napoleon and Wellington ushered into the world,—he had joined the 8th Foot as an ensign in 1785, when he was but sixteen. But the chances of regimental service in that corps and in the 49th—into which he exchanged in 1791 — had not permitted him to hear a shot fired in anger till 1799. He missed all the early years of the French Revolutionary War, and saw his first campaign in the Duke of York's disastrous and ill-managed invasion of North Holland. He was, however, one of the few officers who emerged with an enhanced reputation from that miserable business, and when he came to command the 49th as Lieutenant-colonel, it was said of him by the Commander-in-Chief that he had made one of the worst battalions in the service into one of the best. After the Dutch campaign he only once again went on active service before 1812, his regiment having been told off to serve as marines on board Sir Hyde Parker's fleet in the spring of 1801. Thus he was present on board the *Ganges* at Nelson's bombardment of Copenhagen, in which engagement his men, scattered among various line-of-battle-ships, lost eight killed and twenty wounded. But there was little opportunity for a colonel to distinguish himself in this contest of ships and batteries.

In 1802 the 49th were sent out to Canada, and there abode for the next thirteen years. This was absolutely the only part of the British Empire where, during the great war with Napoleon, a regiment had no chance of seeing active service. Colonel Brock therefore had, during the best years of his ripe manhood, no opportunity to show his military ability. His battalion was told off to the Upper Province, and was scattered in detachments over several forts and outposts, separated from each other by hundreds of miles—a condition of affairs that told

terribly against regimental efficiency. The Colonel had always to be on the move, and never saw his whole ten companies assembled together on parade. On one occasion he had to quell by his sudden appearance a dangerous mutiny, caused by the senseless and capricious severity of his second-in-command, who had been left alone for some months in charge of the detachment stationed at Fort George, on the Straits of Niagara. The men had plotted to shoot their tyrant, and to abscond in a body to the opposite American shore. Fortunately Brock heard rumours of the prevailing discontent at his distant headquarters, and hurried up from York (the modern Toronto) just in time to prevent the outbreak and to arrest the ringleaders. He came accompanied by his sergeant-major alone, but his mere presence sufficed to render impossible a crime which would have left a very black spot on the history of the British Army.

Brock became a brigadier in 1808 and a major-general in June 1811: three months later he received a very honourable and arduous commission, which gave him a civil as well as a military status, by being made "President and Administrator of the Government of Upper Canada." This appointment was one of the most profitable nominations ever made in 'The London Gazette,' since it put the right man in the right place, just nine months before the crisis which was to arise from the outbreak of war with the United States in June 1812. Brock was given time to settle himself into the saddle, and to familiarise himself with his duties and his responsibilities before the time of trial came. He was already, from ten years' residence in Canada, well acquainted with all the leading men of the Upper Province, official and non-official. He knew the land and water ways by which its thinly scattered population communicated with each other. He could gauge exactly its very limited resources in men and money. He could tell where he might expect apathy and where enthusiastic support, when the time of trouble should arrive. Best of all, he had time to impress his own cheery, energetic, resourceful temperament on those who were about him.

All accounts agree that Isaac Brock had a most dominating personality. He was now in his forty-third year, in the full vigour of robust middle age. He was of commanding stature, not less than six feet two inches in height, and was correspondingly broad built. But he was neither heavy nor ungainly. In his youth he had been a noted boxer and swimmer; he was still a great athlete, capable of any endurance of fatigue, on foot or on horseback—though it was not always easy to find a charger up to his weight. He was of a fair and florid complexion, with a high forehead, a full face, a small mouth, and very lively and restless grey-blue eyes. Several of those who

knew him note the habitual cheerfulness of his demeanour, and his winning smile. "His manners were courteous, frank, and engaging," says one biographer; "in converse he was exceedingly affable and gentlemanly," says another, "of a cheerful and social habit, partial to dancing, and (though he was never married) extremely sensible to the charms of female society." A third speaks of him as having "a commanding bearing but a gentle manner—irreproachable in private life, universally respected by those who did not personally know him, and loved by those who did." One of the best monuments to his memory is the string of anecdotes concerning his thoughtful kindness, in the Life of his favourite Sergeant-Major James Fitzgibbon, who by his patronage was promoted to a commission, and became one of the best and most daring leaders of light troops in the oncoming war.

Such a chief as Brock was much needed on the frontier in 1812, for his superior, the Governor-General at Quebec, Sir George Prevost, was not the man to save an empire. A politician rather than a soldier, irresolute and down-hearted, with no confidence in himself and no military skill, he might have lost Canada if he had not been blessed with vigorous subordinates. His only saving virtue was that, as American born and of French descent, he was popular among the *habitans* of the province of Quebec, whom he managed with some skill, and who followed him with more loyalty than they might, perhaps, have shown to an unsympathetic English governor. But he was a miserable strategist, and ended his career by a failure so glaring that he was superseded and sent home to England to be tried by court-martial. He died just after the war had ended, a few days before the date appointed for his trial. Anything might have happened in 1812, if Prevost had been represented in the Upper Province by a lieutenant as incapable as himself.

When the Americans declared war in June, and proceeded a few days later to cross the Canadian frontier, Brock had only 1500 regular troops under his command—one complete battalion, the 41st Foot, 900 strong, and five companies each of the 10th Veteran Battalion, and the Newfoundland Regiment, with one company of field artillery. His own loved 49th Foot was at this time at Montreal, in the Lower Province, and not at his disposition. To defend 1300 miles of frontier, on lake and land, with this handful of regulars would have been impossible even to a man of Brock's energy. His one hope lay in the newly organised local militia, with which he had to supplement his British troops. From the first threatenings of war onward, he had been hard at work in constructing *cadres* for the new battalions and companies, choosing officers for them, and indenting at Quebec for arms and ammunition. Fortunately the great

bulk of the population with which he had to deal was loyal and trustworthy, and responded eagerly to his call. There were but 80,000 souls in all within the province, and he could not hope to embody more than 4000 or 5000 men at the best. But Upper Canada had been originally settled with the exiled "United Empire Loyalists," the gallant remnant of the "Tory" party in the revolted American colonies, who, in 1783, had preferred to follow the old flag to a strange land rather than to accept citizenship of the United States. The memory of their bitter strife with the republican party during the Revolutionary War, and of the cruelty and insult with which they had been treated in the hour of defeat, was still strong in the old generation, and their children had been brought up to hate the Stars and Stripes, and the much-abused name of Liberty, with a perfect hatred. King George had no more loyal subjects than the descendants of the heroic emigrants who had pitched their habitation in the remote unsettled North, and had hewn out their clearings in the wilderness. The call to resist American invasion was welcomed without hesitation by the bulk of the population of the province. It was true that there were weak points—the French or half-French hunters and fishers along the western lakes, who clustered particularly thick on the peninsula facing Detroit, were little interested in the strife between two sets of English-speaking aliens, and were rather inclined to take a neutral attitude. In this same direction there were also a certain amount of American settlers, who had drifted in from Ohio, and who were of course in sympathy with their brethren across the border. Hence the militia levy of the county of Essex, the extreme western district of the Upper Province, was unsatisfactory to a great extent. On the other hand, the people of the counties more to the East, about the Niagara Peninsula, and the newly settled towns of York and Kingston, were enthusiastic loyalists, and gave all the help that Brock demanded, even raising for him (what could hardly have been expected) some troops of cavalry, and a volunteer battery of light artillery: of this the men and horses were drawn from a transport column, the "Car Brigade," whose members insisted on taking a more active part than that of waggoners in the strife. The militia out of whom the General got most service were those of the three counties of York, Lincoln, and Norfolk, on the Niagara frontier. But those of Stormont, Glengarry, Dundas, and the other eastern counties of the Upper Province were all doing good duty in watching the line of the St Lawrence, between Kingston and Montreal.

The calling out of the militia was made under every possible drawback. "The King's stores," wrote Brock to Prevost,

"are now at so low an ebb that they can scarcely furnish any article of use or comfort. Blankets, hammocks, and kettles are all to be purchased: the troops watching the banks of the river [St Lawrence] stand in the utmost need of tents." The only means to pay the embodied militia was by a local paper currency. Uniforms had only been provided in full for the flank companies: of the rest, many had to turn out in such short round dark jackets as they could procure. But uniforms matter little when the spirit is willing. Of the 4000 militia of the Upper Province only about a third were raised in its western half, where Brock's operations were to take place, along the lakes of Ontario and Erie: the rest belonged to the eastern counties, and were too far off to be available: indeed, their duty lay rather in the Montreal region and along the Upper St Lawrence. The total force on which the Governor could reckon on the Niagara and Detroit frontiers, counting regulars and militia together, was about 2700 men.

He also had, for what it was worth, the support of the thinly scattered Indian tribes of the North-West, auxiliaries very useful for irregular fighting but most untrustworthy, who never appeared at any one place with more than 600 warriors. Usually they came in the greatest numbers when they were least wanted, and dwindled down to a few scores just when their services would have been most essential. They could not be trusted in the open, or in the attack or defence of entrenchments: they often disobeyed orders: and they caused infinite dismay and anger to their allies by their proneness to massacre the wounded and prisoners, whenever a sharp eye was not kept upon them. That any service was got out of them at all was mainly due to the celebrated Shawnee chief Tecumseh, one of the few masterful personalities who emerged on the Indian side during the long strife between red men and white in the West. Driven out of the lands along the Wabash by the Americans, he had sought refuge in Upper Canada with the remnant of his tribe, and placed himself at the disposition of the British. His own followers were few, but he exercised a considerable if intermittent authority over other tribes by virtue of his personal qualities. Not only a great scout and warrior but an orator and a diplomatist, he was admired by the red men, because he taught them to combine and to sink their old feuds, but still more by the white, because he possessed the virtues, unusual in an Indian chief, of strict adherence to his pledged word, and of a humanity that was absolutely unknown to his fellows. Having once promised Brock that his men should spare the lives of prisoners, he did his best to enforce the rule: he was seen on one occasion to dash out the brains of a warrior whom he caught mutilating a

wounded American soldier. But Tecumseh could not be everywhere at once: he was but the chief of a broken tribe, and when he was not present his feckless fellow-countrymen were all too prone to melt away homeward with their plunder, to fall to the fire-water and remain in a state of hopeless intoxication for days on end, or to disappear after a slight reverse, or the refusal of some preposterous petition. The real use of the Indians to Brock was mainly that their presence in the woods, and the knowledge of the atrocities of which they were capable, made the Americans very loth to move save in large parties, hindered all scouting by the invaders, and made them very cautious and circumspect. The terror caused by the lurking red man was a more useful asset to the British than his actual achievements in the field. If Brock once or twice had 500 or 600 Indians in his camp, it was quite as common for him to find that they had mostly disappeared when they were specially wanted, and that only the trusty Tecumseh and some few scores remained available.

On June 18, 1812, President Madison had declared war on Great Britain. The news reached the Governor-General at Quebec on the 25th, but Brock had it a day earlier, on the 24th, by private letters from New York, and so was enabled to make up his plan of campaign some days before he received any communication from his chief. To the Americans at the western end of the lakes it came even more slowly,—General Hull at Detroit got it only on July 2, eight days after Brock had his notice.

Hull's force, on the extreme right flank of Upper Canada, was the only one ready for immediate action,—it had been waiting the word to move for some days. On July 12 it had crossed the Detroit river and occupied Sandwich on the British shore. On the Niagara frontier, at the eastern end of Lake Erie, there was an assembly of New York State Militia under General Van Rensselaer, but it was not ready to move, having to wait for a brigade of regular troops and other reinforcements. After another interval, beyond the other end of Lake Ontario, the American Commander-in-Chief, Dearborn, was collecting what he intended to be his main army, for an advance against Montreal. President Madison had made the mistake of declaring war before he was ready—underestimating with the optimism of a civilian the time that it would take to assemble and organise the numerous but scattered resources at his disposal. It must be confessed that he was ill-served by the military men whom he had taken as his advisers,—his senior officer, Dearborn, was most of all a master of procrastination and indecision. As an American historian has observed, "Madison's orders to Hull and Dearborn passed beyond the bounds of ordinary incapacity, but Dearborn's answers passed belief."

Nevertheless, if only the necessary weeks for mobilisation and concentration were granted them, the Americans could certainly pour overwhelming forces over the frontier, and bear down all opposition.

This Brock saw, and took at once the only course open to a soldier who has a small but trustworthy force under his hand, while his enemy is slowly collecting his far superior resources. He would strike at once, to right and left, before the opponent is ready. But in this case the difficulties of striking were enormous: his scanty numbers were not gathered, and a "minimum garrison" had to be left in the forts which watched the waterways. There were three companies of the 41st at Fort Malden on the Detroit river, four more at Fort George on the Niagara frontier. The central reserve, with which Brock proposed to transfer himself from one end to another of a line 600 miles long, for offensive purposes, consisted of two companies of the 41st and under 300 volunteers from the York Militia! And the movement of this force of about 400 men was to be in open boats, along a lake 257 miles long, hugging a shore often precipitous, with unsafe anchorage on a rocky bottom, and in a region noted for its summer storms. Nevertheless, Brock started off from York on August 6, after having harangued and dissolved the legislature of Upper Canada. His speech ended with the stirring words—

"We are engaged in an awful and eventful contest. By unanimity and dispatch in our councils, and by vigour in our operations, we may teach the enemy this lesson, that a country defended by *free* men, enthusiastically devoted to the cause of their king and constitution, can never be conquered."

From the modest hall of the Provincial Assembly Brock hastened across the Niagara peninsula to the spot near the eastern end of Lake Erie where his boats were waiting for him, and in five days of difficult navigation, rendered miserable by much rain, brought his little flotilla to Fort Malden, where he was rejoiced to find the detachment of the 41st, under Colonel Proctor, still holding out. Things might have been otherwise, for the American Army of the West had now been a full month on Canadian soil. But General Hull, like his superior, Dearborn, was a procrastinator: he only saw his own difficulties, not those of the enemy: he had started with over 2000 men, one regiment of United States regulars, three of Ohio and one of Michigan militia. Opposite him there had been nothing save Proctor's three companies, a few hundred Indians, and the untrustworthy militia of Essex County, the one weak element in the local levy of the Upper Province, as we have already mentioned. The majority of them were either French-Canadians or Americans, and they had melted away from their officers

save some few scores. Nevertheless Proctor made a show of defending the Rivière aux Canards, the marshy stream between Hull's position at Sandwich and his own at Fort Malden, though he knew that he must give way if he were attacked seriously. But the attack never came! Hull issued a verbose and magniloquent proclamation on the day of his crossing the frontier, in which he assured the inhabitants of Upper Canada that, "separated by an immense ocean from Great Britain, they had no share in her councils, no interest in her conduct. They were tendered the invaluable blessings of civil, political, and religious liberty, and their necessary results — individual and public prosperity. The arrival of an army of friends must be hailed with a cordial welcome, for it would emancipate them from tyranny and oppression, and restore them to the dignified status of freed men." This was all fine enough, but the General did not advance—he pleaded sickness among his men, shortage of stores, the want of heavy artillery, the need for awaiting the reinforcements which were moving up to him from Ohio, and failed to give the decisive push forward which must have been successful.

Presently Proctor, emboldened by seeing his adversary so dilatory and cautious, pushed small detachments across the Detroit river, to harass Hull by breaking his line of communication with Ohio. On August 5, an Indian party headed by Tecumseh cut up a large American party moving out to bring in a convoy. Using as his excuse the necessity for reopening the road, Hull moved back into Michigan three days later, and settled down under the guns of Fort Detroit,—so ended the invasion of Canada! He made on August 8 an attempt to open up the southward road, but though he brushed away for a moment the trifling force which Proctor had sent over the water, he failed to get into communication with the friends with whom he was hoping to join hands.

Five days later General Brock and his little flotilla reached Amherstburg, the village below Fort Malden, and joined Proctor. He made but a short survey of the situation, but judging from general report, confirmed by some intercepted dispatches, that the enemy had a weak and downhearted general, and had lost all confidence in the success of their campaign, he resolved to attack at once. He knew that the number of the reinforcement which he had brought was overestimated, and that Hull had a vague belief that Indians in thousands were coming in for his extermination. Against such an opponent vigorous action, accompanied by any amount of preliminary "bluffing," was permissible. On August 15 Brock boldly sent in to Hull a summons to surrender Fort Detroit and his army, adding, with splendid mendacity, that the force at his disposal authorised a demand for instant submission.

Hull sent the proper negative reply, but trembled at his own temerity. On the following morning Brock crossed the Detroit river with his whole disposable force—350 regulars, 400 militia, between 500 and 600 Indians — and advanced against the fort, driving in the American picquets. He had chosen a favourable moment. Four hundred of Hull's men, with his two best colonels, were out on an expedition in search of food; the fort was full of sick; the Michigan Militia had begun to desert: the General himself thought that he was in a helpless position. One of his officers describes him, while the redcoats were seen advancing: "He sat on an old tent on the ground, leaning his back against the rampart. He kept, apparently unconsciously, filling his mouth with tobacco, putting in quid after quid, till the spittle, coloured with juice, dribbled out on to his neckcloth, cravat, and vest. He seemed preoccupied, his voice trembled, he was greatly agitated and anxious, believing that ultimately the fort would fall, and dreading massacre for all, including the many women and children in the place." Just as Brock had placed his men under cover, and had ascended the brow of a rising ground to reconnoitre the fort, he saw, to his intense surprise and glee, a white flag advancing from the side of the enemy. Hull was sending out word that he was prepared to surrender, in response to yesterday's summons! In consequence the British took possession of the fort within an hour, and found that a force considerably larger than their own had surrendered to them. Hull had with him nearly 400 of the 4th United States regulars, a battery of regular artillery, some 300 Michigan militia, and 700 or 800 Ohio militia, with 33 guns. In addition, he —quite in the style of Dupont at Baylen — consented to include in his capitulation the large foraging party which was absent from the fort at the moment, and a small garrison which he had left at the river Raisin, a half-way house to his base in Ohio. Brock says in his despatch that 2500 Americans in all surrendered to him, but this must include many sick, and possibly the civil population, which had taken refuge in Detroit. The total of efficient fighting men seem to have been not more than 1700.

The capitulation came just in time, for already heavy reinforcements for Hull were on their way from Ohio: the leading column of 2500 regulars and militia, under General Winchester, would have been up to the fort in September, if it had not heard of the disaster at Detroit, and stayed its march. In short, if Brock had not seized the psychological moment for his bold advance, he would have been overwhelmed a few weeks later by forces three or four times outnumbering his own! But for the present the Detroit frontier was safe, and the victor could return to the

other point of danger, the Niagara frontier, where — for all he knew—untoward events might have been happening during his absence. By August 20 he was at sea again on Lake Erie, bringing back with him the militia volunteers who had accompanied him to the West and part of the 41st Foot. By the 24th he was once more at Fort George on the Niagara river. He found that in his absence Prevost and General Dearborn, two opponents who each realised his own weakness, and did not think of his adversary's straits, had concluded a truce, on the pretence that negotiations at Washington might yet lead to a peace. The delay was more profitable to the American, since his resources and reinforcements lay much closer to hand than did those of the British General. When President Madison refused to ratify the suspension of arms, and declared the continuance of war inevitable, the American reserves had begun to come up, but Prevost had not yet received any reinforcements from England, nor could he do so for many a day.

On September 4 Brock received, at Kingston, the news that the truce was at an end, and two days later he was back on the Niagara frontier, preparing to receive the inevitable attack. He had at his disposition four companies of the 41st and six of the 49th, which Prevost had recently sent to him from the Lower Province, together with the militia of the counties of York, Lincoln, and Norfolk, the whole amounting to a little over 2000 bayonets. In addition between 200 and 300 Indians had joined him. With this force he had to guard the whole length of the Niagara river, some thirty-six miles from lake to lake, of which only the central portion, along the precipices above and below the Great Falls, could be considered impracticable to the enemy. At each end of the broad river was a small British post, Fort George on Lake Ontario, Fort Erie on the lake of the same name. All save the small space covered by their guns had to be watched by Brock's little army. Opposite him the Americans had concentrated numbers rather more than double his own, including a brigade of 1600 regulars under Major-General Alexander Smyth, at or near Buffalo, which faces Fort Erie across the water, and another regular regiment and some 2300 New York Militia at Lewistown and Fort Niagara, at the other end of the river, below the Falls. Here the senior officer was Major-General Stephen van Rensselaer, commanding the New York contingent: the total force on the frontier was over 6000 men. Fortunately for Brock, the two American generals were bitter enemies: they belonged to opposite political parties, and Smyth, as an officer of the regular army, treated Van Rensselaer, as a mere militia general, with contempt. They quarrelled as to the point at which it would be best to cross the Niagara river, each holding

that his own end of the line offered the best opportunities: Smyth would force a passage above the Falls, Van Rensselaer below.

Finally, as the autumn was wearing on, and the militia growing discontented and beginning to demand that they should either be employed in action or sent home for the winter, Van Rensselaer resolved that he would cross on his own responsibility. He was heartened up by a false report, brought by a spy, that Brock had just departed to Detroit. After an abortive attempt at a start on the night of October 10, which miscarried owing to a blunder about guides and oars, he made his stroke after dark on the 12th, using his own division alone, though he had sent to Smyth what he in his dispatch calls "orders," but what Smyth treated as a negligible suggestion, to bring up the three regiments from Buffalo to his support. It may be remembered that the regular general showed himself, in a later month of the campaign, as incapable in the position of commander-in-chief as he now showed himself disloyal in the position of colleague. He never stirred to help the effort on his right.

Van Rensselaer had fixed upon the heights above the Canadian village of Queenstown, seven miles from the northern end of the river, as his objective. Landing below them, he intended to seize a position on their crest, and then fortify himself in an entrenched camp, to which he would draw over Smyth and his other reserves. As he had more than 3500 of his own brigade present, while Brock's 2000 men were necessarily strung out along a front of 36 miles, and could not be concentrated till the second day, there was a reasonable probability of success. The opposition to him must be trifling at the first, and he ought to be well established in a central position, breaking the Canadian line of defence in two, before he could be attacked by any serious force. But Van Rensselaer had failed to reckon on the splendid energy of Brock and his men, and on the want of organisation and coherence in his own command, of which three-fourths were raw and undisciplined militiamen.

On the night of the 12th–13th October, Van Rensselaer threw his advanced-guard across the rapid river, just above Queenstown, at a point where the passage was completely commanded by a six-gun battery on his own side. Some of his boats were carried too far down stream, but ten, bearing some 225 men, mostly of the 13th United States regulars, struck the bank at the appointed spot, put their men ashore, and returned for a second load. The passage had not escaped the notice of the British picquets along the bank, and before dawn opposition was beginning. At Queenstown there lay the two flank companies of the 49th Regiment, and two more of the York Militia. By four o'clock in the morning a

small "containing force" of some 90 men, half regulars, half militia, was skirmishing with the landing party, which had established itself close to the bank, to wait for reinforcements. Riders had been sent up and down stream to warn Brock at Fort George, and the detachments at Brown's Point, Chippewa, and the distant Fort Erie, that the invasion had come at last. Meanwhile the American boats were beginning to ply to and fro, only slightly incommoded by two one-gun batteries on the Canadian shore, of which one was soon silenced by the six guns opposite, and the other was too far from the passage-point to be effective.

When the second party of Americans came ashore, they drove in the British skirmishing line, though not before Colonel Solomon van Rensselaer (cousin of the general), three other officers, and many men had fallen. But a check was given to their advance when the rest of the garrison of Queenstown came up: though still only 250 strong, against about 500, the 49th and York Militia companies fought strongly, and wasted for their adversaries the time which was so all-important for the mustering of the defenders.

About seven o'clock Brock himself came upon the scene absolutely alone: he had outridden his solitary aide-de-camp, and took up his post on the edge of Queenstown Heights, overlooking the scene of the skirmish. Below him he could see the slow advance of the Americans in the flat by the river, the boats crossing and recrossing behind them, and the camp at Lewistown slowly disgorging its battalions into the river-craft. His whole confidence lay in the hope that his reinforcements from Fort George and Chippewa — four companies of the 41st, two of militia, and some 200 Indians —would be up in time to stop the attack before it had been reinforced to an overwhelming strength. Therefore it was necessary for the troops already on the ground to hold out with all desperation. Brock's first order was for the last unengaged units—the light company of the 49th and Chisholm's company of the York Militia — to charge in hard. But presently he saw that he was outflanked: by an unobserved fishermen's track along the steep slope of the Heights, a party of the 13th United States regulars, on the extreme American left, was working itself up to the crest.

The General was standing by the one-gun battery on the edge of the heights, whose garrison of twelve men was now his sole reserve. When the musket-balls began to fall around him, he was forced to retire, and with a rush some 150 Americans reached the crest, seized the battery, and took up a position about it. It was absolutely necessary to keep them back, and Brock called up from the skirmish below the nearest men that could be caught, some 90 regulars and militia mixed,

and advanced to recover the point of vantage. The skirmish grew hot: the British and Canadians charged, were repelled, and charged again. At this moment it was reported to Brock that his first reinforcement had come up—two weak companies, 90 men, of the York Militia from Brown's Point. He was turning to shout to the messenger, "Push on the York Volunteers," when he was struck by a ball in the right breast, which passed completely through his body. He rolled off his horse, had just breath left enough to bid the officer nearest him to keep his fall concealed, and was dead within the minute. His corpse was carried down hill to Queenstown and hidden under a pile of blankets, in obedience to his orders.

The charge which Brock was leading was continued, under the leadership of his Canadian aide-de-camp John Macdonell. It drove the Americans out of the battery, and to the very edge of the precipitous slope behind it. But the striking force was too small: Macdonell fell, and with him nearly all the other officers of the companies engaged. The enemy was being continually reinforced up the steep path behind, and the odds were too great. The attack failed, and the survivors withdrew far back on to the plateau, where they were joined by the remnants of the detachment that had been fighting below. Not more than 200 unwounded men were left: the reinforcements from Fort George and Chippewa were not yet arrived. It looked as if the Americans had won the heights and established themselves on the point of vantage at which they had aimed.

But Brock's glorious fight had not failed in its object. The enemy was exhausted: the regular regiment which formed the kernel of his army had done most of the fighting, and was now a spent force. The reinforcements were crossing the river with an incredible slowness, due to want of order and discipline. Only 1300 men had been passed up to noon, out of 3500 who had to cross. The advanced division, reduced to some 600 or 800 men, had established itself, it is true, on the heights, but had neither begun to entrench, nor to deploy in order to drive back the small force still opposed to it. General van Rensselaer, who had crossed late, after surveying the position, grew anxious about his reinforcements. The boats, he says in his despatch, were plying very slowly, the troops embarking with inexplicable tardiness. He recrossed the river, to hurry matters up in the camp at Lewistown.

In his absence the crisis suddenly came: at last Brigadier Sheaffe had arrived from Fort George with four companies of the 41st and 200 Indian warriors. From the other flank at Chippewa about 100 more regulars had come up. The whole met the wrecks of the containing force near the village of St Davids, below

the northern brow of Queenstown Heights. They mustered only 800 in all, including the Indians; but the sole chance lay in striking before the whole American army was over the water. Brock's intentions were known, and his spirit still dominated in the strife, though his body lay hidden obscurely two miles away. Sheaffe, though he had many defects, was a good fighter: an old "United Empire Loyalist," who had served King George from the days of Bunker's Hill, he saw the chance of avenging many an ancient grudge on the old enemy. He deployed his little force, advanced obliquely up the heights at a great distance from the enemy's front, and sent out his Indians to work through some wooded ground on the left against the American flank, while he himself, the regulars on the right, the militia on the left, advanced in one two-deep line against their front.

The attack was completely successful: the Americans were tired out by the earlier fighting, and disheartened by the non-arrival of their reinforcements. Many of the militia, it is said, were skulking at the foot of the slope, or on the river bank, instead of holding their place on the heights. One push sent the whole line flying: reeling back from the battery which they held, the whole were brought up by the precipice at their back. A few scrambled away by the path, but the majority threw down their arms. Pressing on, as best they could, in such rugged ground, Sheaffe's men took more prisoners in the flat below, and saw the boats shove off to the opposite shore with a flying remnant of their adversaries.

And so, like Douglas at Otterbourne, "the dead man won the field." The part of the American army which had crossed the Niagara was practically annihilated—the dead are said to have been some 90 in all: the wounded 400: there were 79 officers and 852 men captured, including Brigadier-General Wadsworth, and the artillery Colonel Scott, who was afterwards to be the Commander-in-Chief of the American Army in a later war. Four hundred and thirty-six of the prisoners belonged to the 13th United States Infantry, whose colours were captured, the rest to the militia. The British loss was 112 in all, of whom five-sixths came from the detaining force that had fought so well in the morning.

General van Rensselaer, from the opposite bank, had the mortification of seeing his advanced-guard cut up without being able to send help. His humiliating despatch confesses that his rear would not follow when they saw the danger of his van. "The ardor of the unengaged troops," he writes, "had entirely subsided. I rode in all directions, urged the men by every consideration to pass the river, but in vain. Lieut.-Colonel Bloom, who had been wounded in action and had returned, mounted his horse and rode through the camp, as did also Judge Peck,

who happened to be there, exhorting the companies to proceed, but in vain. . . . One-third part of the idle men might have saved all!" It was fortunate for Canada and for Great Britain that the York and Lincoln Militia were as different in spirit from their opponents as was Brock from the incapable Van Rensselaer!

The battle of Queenstown Heights brought the invasion danger to an end on the Niagara frontier for the rest of 1812, as the capture of Detroit had on the western frontier. Fighting was to recommence in the following spring, and to go through many vicissitudes. But there was never again the peril that Canada might be overwhelmed before she could be reinforced from Great Britain, which had been imminent all through the first autumn of the war. The tale of that struggle is not wholly a cheerful one to remember—English annalists do not linger over the names of the *Guerrière*, the *Java*, and the *Macedonian:* the battle of New Orleans was an "untoward event" of the blackest. But that is no reason why the exploits of Isaac Brock, the saviour of Canada, should be forgotten.

The Provincial Legislature of the Upper Province reared a column as a memorial over his body, and that of his faithful aide-de-camp Macdonell, on the spot where they fell. Many years after it was wrecked by an Irish-American named Lett, who had secretly introduced a quantity of gunpowder into the vault at its base. To wreck the grave of a hero seemed to him a neat and appropriate method of insulting the British Empire. The Canadians replaced the shattered monument by a much more stately structure, which dominates the whole surrounding countryside, and is one of the landmarks of the Niagara country. A proper centenary celebration was held around it on October 13th last. Great Britain placed a cenotaph in Brock's honour in the south transept of St Paul's Cathedral, on which (in the classical style of the day) the general sinks down dying into the arms of a soldier of the 41st Regiment, while an Indian chief stands weeping at his feet.

C. W. C. Oman.

Oxford.

FROM THE OUTPOSTS.

RAMMU.

RAMMU was an aboriginal of the Vindhyan Sandstone hills in Central India. He entered my life one night in the rains, when all the world had turned to blue lightning and running water, and even the frogs were battered into silence. Asleep in the verandah, I was awakened by some one gently pulling at my right toe, which is the correct Indian method of rousing a heavy sleeper. Anticipating no more urgent news than that the bungalow thatch had at last fallen in, I inquired, not too politely, what the trouble was. Then there stole up from the foot of the bed to the pillow end a deplorable sample of brown humanity, and realising that something was seriously the matter, I sat sideways on the bed to get a better view of him.

He was about five feet high, and stark naked, except for a dirty rag round his temples. The steady flicker of the lightning lit up his dripping body, but even if his face had been invisible, the pattern of the axe he carried showed that he was from the jungles. His teeth were chattering so violently with cold and exposure that he could not utter a word in answer to my questions. He was in grave mental trouble also. An uneducated Indian confessing to a misdemeanour seizes the lobe of one ear in his left hand and stands on one leg, in token of abject penitence. Speech failing him, the little man made desperate efforts to put himself into the position demanded, as he evidently considered, by the occasion, but he was stiff and stupid and shivering. First he dropped his axe, which he promptly retrieved with his toes; then he hesitated between a choice of ears, and when, finally, he selected one, even his splay aboriginal foot proved a pediment inadequate to his rocking body, and he fell with a clatter on the flags. I helped him to his feet and into the office, where there was a lantern burning. A rug and a tot of whisky put life into him, and he told me his story.

He was a Bhoi Gond from the teak forests on the eastern border, and had come to tell me that he had killed his wife the morning before. The elders of the village, his caste fellows, had said that the Sarkar insisted on full and early information of such happenings, in the absence of which they would be put to grievous troubles. So he had started for headquarters at once, trusting to cover the thirty odd miles before nightfall. But heavy rain came down and all the streams rose. He had swum three rivers and lost his waist-cloth in one

(but not, I observed, his axe!). Then he had been overtaken by a colic. All these things had delayed him, and he had been obliged to wake me up, for he had been given to understand the matter was urgent. His wife had persisted in burning his bread, and no man could put up with that for ever, though he had been long-suffering and beaten her patiently for weeks. On the latest occasion, however, instead of taking her beating quietly, she had called him two shameful names and run out of the hut. After a short pursuit he had thrown his axe at her. He could not tell where the weapon had struck her, because he had not looked, but she fell and never rose again, and she was certainly dead, and he had brought the axe as ordered by the village headman. His story told, he curled up in a corner of the office and went to sleep.

The sessions judge who in due time tried him, found himself in a dilemma. To begin with, by the time the police had waded to the village, the corpse had disappeared. Then there were no witnesses of the offence, and while he was compelled to accept the accused's version of the facts, he was equally bound to believe his statement that he had no intention of killing the woman. The axe was scarcely heavier than a toy. Eventually Rammu was convicted of causing hurt with a dangerous weapon and sentenced to three months' rigorous imprisonment.

A week after his release he appeared in my verandah with an appropriate testimonial of his gratitude. Not for him to offer the "dolly" of pine-apples and guavas, melons and graft mangoes, that the civilised Hindu on high days and holidays deposits at the District Officer's doorway. But he had his axe, which cost only fourpence, and his eyes, and some hundreds of miles of jungle to ransack, and the pile of uncanny eatables that he poured on the verandah flags would have stocked a small greengrocer's shop. There were yams, horribly resembling scalded puppies with their legs lopped off, and contorted roots like knotted ropes which, he explained, must be scraped and soaked for a whole night in running water to steep the poison out of them. Otherwise the eater would become violently insane. There were green and golden fruits of agonising sourness or astringency, and sometimes of both, many varieties of indigestible-looking seeds, and a heap of sickly yellow flowers with fleshy petals that smelt like hair-wash. These last were to give flavour to the yams. When I had sufficiently admired his present he stood on one leg, put his palms together, looked me cheerfully in the face, and said in a loud voice, "Hé, Dadda, make me your servant!"

I did not accept his offer. To put a wild Bhoi to housework would have been sheer cruelty, and though his prehensile toes were eminently

fitted to recover my shirt-stud from its frequent escapings under the dressing-table, I could not afford to keep a man exclusively for this function. I thought of making him a grass-cut, but, like all his people, he was far more afraid of a horse than of a tiger, and this career was obviously closed to him. In the end we compromised to this effect, namely, that whenever my tours fell in the jungly tracts of the district, he, Rammu, on receipt of due notice, was to accompany me on a wage of fourpence per diem, help me in shikar and enlighten my ignorance on the subject of trees, birds, animals, and jungle life in general. I never made a better bargain in my life, and now that he is dead,—"gone," as his own people express it, "to the far folk,"—a more than transient regret for the loss of a loyal friend and delightful companion suggests this humble tribute to his memory.

There was nothing of the noble savage in his appearance, which was that of an undersized elderly gnome carved in chocolate. Arms, legs, and body were, considering his powers of endurance, astonishingly lacking in muscle, his shoulders were rounded, and he walked with a slight limp, due to the bite of a wild sow on whose litter he had, as a boy, inadvertently stumbled. The scars of this were conspicuous on the back of one thigh, where the muscle seemed permanently shrunken. His feet were very large, and as useful to him as an extra pair of hands. A dirty rag, from which fluttered a long elf-lock bleached to a rusty brown, round his scalp, and a similar, but if possible, dirtier, waist-cloth, were his attire in all seasons. In short, he was a sufficiently typical specimen of the pre-Aryan races of India, whom the Hindu invader of the plains still regards with mingled contempt and dread, abhorring their indifference to ceremonial ablution, but crediting them with knowledge of the blackest magic and unconquerable spells.

> "They know the secret of the hills
> And the oldest kind of song."

Now, to extract information of any kind from the aboriginal of the Vindhyan hills is generally a heart-breaking affair. Centuries of furtive existence and, whenever he could be caught, of maltreatment, at the hands of stronger races, have made him as suspicious as a carp. He scents a hook in every question. "Why," he reasons, "does the Sahib ask me about flying squirrels? If I tell him, he will order me to show him one. He will walk a long way, get thirsty, and perhaps we may not see a single squirrel. Then he will get angry, and in any case his servants will put me on to do unpleasant jobs about his camp." Accordingly, he answers that he himself has never seen such an animal—but, yes! he hears that they abound in the jungles of the next range, forty miles

away. Questioned on the subject of bears, or what he ate yesterday, or the propriety of marrying a deceased wife's sister, he will evade responsibility with the same exasperating wariness. In numberless attempts to "draw" these jungle people on matters concerning their daily lives I had experienced to the full

> "The sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
> Which much to have tried, in much been baffled brings;"

and now that Providence had, so to speak, delivered into my hands a wild Bhoi, body and soul, I proceeded with a caution born of many disheartening failures to make the most of him. The initial difficulty of winning his confidence had already been surmounted. The rest, when one had grasped the fact that the question direct was the least promising method of inducing him to talk, was comparatively plain sailing.

He was, as I have said, a delightful companion, and the charm of his conversation lay as much in the manner as in the subject of it. Bilingual from childhood, he spoke in a Dravidian tongue among his fellow-tribesmen, but to me in a pure, deliberate, vivid Hindi, choosing his words carefully, much as certain Gaelic-speaking Highlanders venture upon the English language. He was, I believe, physically incapable of telling an intentional falsehood. I have in my mind a blowing March morning, when the tall cotton-trees were in full blossom, each tree a tower of crimson against a dazzling blue and white sky. Rammu had just chopped a dishevelled hen hornbill out of her nest in a hollow trunk, where her husband, after the manner of hornbills, had walled her in with mud until such time as her maternal duties should be completed. After this exploit a rest in the shade and a smoke were imperative, and our talk slid from birds to snakes in general, and, finally, to my objective, that magnificent rarity, the great rock python.

"I have heard," I said airily, "that crocodiles, when they attain a certain age, crawl up from rivers into caves of the mountains. Then their hands and feet drop off, their hide, by much rubbing against the stones, becomes thin, and they turn into 'azhgars'—pythons." (This interesting item of natural history had been imparted to me, in the best of faith, by a Bengali pleader.)

The bait was swallowed. "That is false," he replied earnestly. "God made the two creatures distinct from birth. I have seen a python once in my life, when I was a boy, on my way down to the wheat harvest. I heard a snoring sound from a nullah, and peeping over the bank, saw an 'azhgar' with a dog jackal half way down her throat. She was about as long as three men and as thick as my thigh. Then I carried the news to the gentry and landowners of the villages round about, and they gave me free victuals and came and held a council, sitting on both

sides of the great snake as if they were at a wedding. Some said, 'When she has digested the jackal she will certainly devour our children. Let us kill her.' But the elder men declared that to kill her would bring a curse upon them. 'From underground she came, to the earth let her return.' So they dug a trench in the nullah, and rolled her into it while she lay gorged, and heaped the earth over her again, and I went on my way." Pythons, he added, drew their prey from a distance by their powers of suction, at least so he had heard. God knew if it was true. He was always scrupulously careful to distinguish hearsay from direct evidence. On another occasion we talked of sloth-bears, "reech," of which he and his people dwelt in great fear. Four men of his village were once gathering mahwa fruit in the jungle, when a "reech" charged out upon them and wantonly mauled one of their number, so that he was never the same man again. The rest escaped to the village and told their story. "Then a lad of eighteen years rose up and cut a green staff as long and as thick as his arm, and said he would punish the bear. He paid no heed to our prayers and warnings, but took the staff in his left hand and laid his axe on his shoulder and went out alone, but we followed at a distance. When the bear heard the 'jhomp, jhomp' of his footsteps, he ran at him roaring. Then the young man held out the greenwood staff in his left hand and said, 'Bite that, you rascal.' So the bear bit it, and the young man smote him on the forehead with the axe, and the 'reech' rolled over dead." Those of us who have stood up to a charging bear, and felt far from happy even behind two barrels of a bone-smashing express of faultless workmanship, with all the security that low trajectory, cordite shells, and soft-nosed bullets can offer, will appreciate the heroism of this unsung David of the sandstone ranges. Rammu's opinion was that "a god had entered into him."

His style, hardly communicable in translation, of terse and vivid description, made it a delight to hear him talk even of common things. One knew, of course, that in early June the men of the jungles went over the precipices to gather wax and wild honey; but his description of this operation, as we sat under a cliff four hundred feet sheer from base to sky-line, elevated it into the epic. In the morning, the cutting and testing of green creepers to serve for ropes, the lashing of them on to rude cradles, the weaving of baskets to hold the heavy combs. Then in the darkest hour of the night, for bees are dangerous even in moonlight, the lowering of the cradles, two men in each, over the precipices into the black gulf of the "khud." One man holds the baskets, some light lines, and a sickle, the other a bamboo pole with a bundle of grass on the end, and in his head-cloth is a

smouldering flake of dried cow-dung. Both have just rubbed wild garlic over their naked bodies. Keeping their feet against the rock, they are lowered to a point a little below the first comb to be attacked. The grass is set ablaze beneath the comb, and up swirls the angry swarm with a deafening roar. The forsaken comb, often as large as a small barrel, is hacked off into the baskets, which are then lowered to the bottom. And so, working swiftly, silently, and in deadly peril, they strip a cliff of a dozen combs in a single night. "Are they often stung?" "Always, more or less," says Rammu, for neither smoke nor wild garlic is a perfect safeguard. Sitting in their crazy swings, dangling in the black night, at the end of sappy vegetable ropes, tortured by stinging bees, and knowing that a hasty movement may betray their presence to the whole swarm, these men put their lives in annual jeopardy, to the huge profit of some swindling Hindu middleman.

Yet he would, when in the humour, enlighten me on small things as carefully and conscientiously as on greater matters. How was I to recognise a chameleon? Why, her gait (all his reptiles were feminine) was like the gait of an elephant, and if you shook a stick at her she turned black. Both of which statements, as I have since discovered by personal observation, are true. Storks form up in line across a shallow inlet, and then, dancing and stamping, drive the frogs before them on to dry land and eat them at their leisure. He had seen them do it. Sambhur stags, when their heavy horns become a weariness, hook them over a low bough and swing to and fro to loosen them. He could show me such a bough, all scored and cut, and had picked up the horns underneath it, but had never seen the great beasts a-swing, because they moved about by night.

Squatting by the camp-fire of an evening, firmly based on his enormous feet, and with the light playing on his grotesque features, he would often tell me of his own life and doings. For three months of the year he lived on his own crop of grass-like millet, from which the greenish-brown "bread," source of the fatal quarrel, is baked. In February he and his family (his first wife had borne him three children, and died in the 1897 famine) would migrate to the plain for the harvesting, children and all — *un qui marche, un qui tette, et un qui vient.* How well one knows those tired little processions of the very poor on the dusty passes leading to the wheat lands! Generation by generation he and his had tramped fifty miles to cut the crops of the same fields. One sheaf in twenty, neither more nor less, was his hire, and his father's and grandfather's before him. The farmer left the counting to him, and made no objection if the wage sheaf were a little heavier than the others. The

threshing finished, he would thatch the homestead, and thus his living was assured to the end of April. May found him back in the jungles with a heavy basket of wheat laid by, and, eking out his cakes with wild fruits, he lived in idleness till the coming of the rains in June. Then he would borrow five or ten rupees to carry him on till the ripening of his millet in autumn, and in the rains, also, the ground was soft and he could dig up yams. He had credit up to twenty rupees with his ancestral Bania, and naturally his debt always stood at that amount. In the famines he went hungry, and as bad as any famine was a doleful year when his first father-in-law paid him a three months' visit. The old man had, or professed to have, a weak stomach, and could digest nothing but rice. The purchase of this expensive food had reduced his host to an exclusive diet of roots and fruits which, unfortified by grain of some kind, are a wretched makeshift.

I gathered that in normal years he worked four days out of the seven, except at harvest time, and on off days he basked in the sun or warmed himself over a fire. He paid nothing for the privilege of sleep, for which the poor man in England is mulcted so cruelly, his house and firing cost him nothing, and he never knew the grinding tyranny of cold. He had no vices, except for a rare and harmless drinking-bout, and no temptations to any. His life and thought and language were pure, and, as I have endeavoured to show, the horizon of his days was broad and varied. He was certainly a happier man than the average worker on the wharves or country-side of England, whose lot would have been a poor exchange for his own.

I sat at his feet, or, more literally, trod in his footsteps, for two cold weathers, during which period I won from him much priceless knowledge. But at the end of one rainy season his son, a straighter and more supple replica of the shivering gnome whom the lightning flashes had revealed to me two years before, stood on the same verandah flags and spoke three words: "Rammu-ka dehant bhao," that is, "Rammu's body has come to an end." A fierce fever of the jungles had carried him off in a few days. Then, as the son was the shyest of the shy, he took permission to leave the terrible headquarters, haunt of uniformed policemen and jail warders and scornful orderlies, and forthwith went away to his home.

So Rammu, axe on shoulder, treads the shadowy road to the far folk, and will never come back again. Pluto, let us hope, will receive the little man kindly at his journey's end, and Orion, perhaps, will now and then ask him to join in the hunting. And if there is harvesting in those "fruitless fields of corn," Rammu will surely be there with a borrowed sickle, and, standing on one leg in presence of the lord of the

harvest, will put his palms together before his face and say, "Hé, Dadda, make me your servant!" One sheaf in twenty will he demand, neither more nor less. But I shall never walk through the teak forests without missing him, and it will be long before I have the heart to begin all over again with another Bhoi Gond. C. G. C. T.

A DAY'S TRAINING.

A hyena howled in the bed of the khor to the south, and the first early chirpings of the birds were heard in the bush around. Then the moon sank until it cut the western horizon, a faint glimmer of light was seen in the east, the camp in the zareba of Kitr Bush awoke, and the camels were fed.

It was December. The air before the sun had risen was still and clear and cold, but the camp, situated near the edge of a dry, sandy water-course—a khor,—was surrounded on all sides by thick bush and undergrowth, and the fires of the sentries watching the camels through the night had thrown warmth into the cleared space of the zareba.

Before sunrise the camels were saddled and standing in two ranks, while the black soldiers holding their bridle-ropes stood to attention, and were told the programme for the day—a scheme drawn up for their training in practising an advance-guard.

Somewhere to the east a railway was being pushed across a now waterless country towards the capital of the province, a line which in its making subsisted on itself, its whole life existing by means of the iron rails it left in its rear.

The men listened with interest when they heard they were to scout through the ten miles of thorny bush, discover Railhead—an imaginary enemy's Railhead—and then cut and destroy the line between Railhead and his base.

A few of the soldiers had served in an Expedition which had conquered by means of the self-same rails, but most of them had never seen a railway train, and so great was their keenness.

They mounted and moved off, spreading out like a bow, men riding in pairs, and, in sight of those, pairs to their right and left. Moving at a trot, they covered perhaps a front of two miles, driving all wild life they met in the bush in front of them.

To make the men more interested in the training, they had been told that animals such as leopard or lion represented scouts of the enemy. They were to report the same at once to their commander. First, a leopard returning from its night's forage was put up; then later on one of the kings of the forest essayed to break through the line of advancing riders, but was driven back;

and again, just in front of the commander, a leopard was surprised quietly stalking a meek-eyed gazelle with its kid. Diversions these which, perhaps, in the views of keen old regimental majors serving at home, are out of place in the training of soldiers, but which keep up the interest in mock warfare of a race who are born fighters, and which only the real thing does not fail to interest.

The bush was thick, and in some places so thorny as to be difficult to penetrate. Perched high up on a camel, a man can see far, so touch was not difficult to maintain. Twice deep awkward khors were crossed, and the formation became ragged and the intervals uneven; but a stony rise, appearing like an island above the top of the thorny scrub which stretched for miles, enabled the commander to see the patches of white moving through the bushes to his right and left, and their direction was good.

The sun was well up and hot when the right of the line halted, and "Halt" was passed along from file to file.

Two scouts in advance of the screen had come racing back —wild men who had been enlisted from the West. They had heard a rumbling to their front and then a whistle of a kind unknown to them, they said—they were not men who had seen the Nile and its steamers.

They had returned even now without seeing anything, but as they could read all the tracks of the country, so also did they know the noises of the desert and bush, and these noises were strange and not one of them.

Word was passed along from file to file to close on the right, and for ten minutes or more men came trotting in, shoving and crashing through branches by the weight of the camels they rode. Many were torn and scratched, but to them that counted as nothing.

Scouts were again sent out, and this time on foot. They returned with more definite news. They had crawled and made their way, they said, up a narrow dry watercourse running east, until they had come to a bank of earth lately thrown across the dry waterway. A bridge was to come later. Cautiously they had crawled to the bank, and then up it, listening, ready on the first sound of the strange whistle to dart back to cover. They told how they had found two pieces of iron held down by iron nails to other iron, but the two pieces on top stretched away as far as they could see on either hand through a newly made opening in the bush. The irons had made no rumbling noise, and had not whistled while they were there. One scout thought he had seen, away against the sun shining on the irons, men working, but of this he was not certain.

The camels were now formed in a square and "barracked," their knees tied. Their guard hastily made a zareba of thorny bush round the four sides of the square, while the rest of the men followed the scouts

in single file down the dry watercourse, to carry out in imagination the destroying of the railway line.

The new bank was reached, and after placing the charges in position the day's exercise was completed.

The soldiers collected on the railway embankment and examined the line. While its mysteries were being explained to them, a construction train approached and whistled. The faces of the scouts beamed. This was the unknown whistle which had puzzled them so much. The train with its trucks loaded up with iron rails went slowly past on the newly laid track, the North conquering again, and holding in its grasp more firmly than ever before the country of Mahdism.

Afterwards the camels were again mounted, and in column of files the men trotted slowly by the side of the embankment down to Railhead.

Four or five thousand workmen, controlled by a subaltern of sappers, and one or two civil engineers—all young and keen—were busy in gangs throwing up embankments, cutting down rises to a lower level, and laying the rails.

Working quietly and methodically, their methods were simple. Gangs of men, each under their native ganger, and each with its portion of piecework to do, were clearing and cutting down the bush, levelling the way, and making embankments where necessary. The construction train, shoving ahead its trucks loaded with iron sleepers and rails, pushed its way up to the very edge of the newly made track. The rails were unloaded and clamped into place, and every few minutes the train moved a few yards on to the freshly laid rails. Strings of trucks in rear, carrying water in tanks from the Nile a hundred and fifty miles away, testified to the many difficulties that had to be fought and reckoned with.

The company halted and dismounted, and the men watched with interest the work, talking eagerly amongst themselves of the mysteries of the engine.

They laughed when they were told it drank more water than a camel, but so quaint is the working of the native mind that, of all the strange things they saw that day, nothing was stranger than the turning on and off of a water-tap, and water that could be made to flow and stop at will from an "iron-box."

Only those who know the country, a thirsty land where water is always the first consideration, can understand how strange this was to them.

Later, when they had ridden back to camp and dismissed, little groups of men round campfires sat long into the night discussing the strange, new objects they had seen that day.

Now they knew "this new Government was strong, stronger than all other governments, and it had come to stay."

N. B. De Lancey Forth.

"——AND A PERLE IN THE MYDDES."

I.

"Tom! hi, Tom! Tom Thacker!"

Snowballs belong to the category of the Unexpected. Even on the dark of a December afternoon, when earth is white and schools are emptied, their essential quality is still that of surprise. A rear attack, and cold shrapnel down the collar . . . no amount of snow on the ground and riotous boyhood in the streets can eliminate the factor of shock from this, of all things unexpected the most, in the conditions, to be expected.

In the streets, I say. But when to the winter-dark is superadded the gloom of a dimly lit cathedral, where, of all things expected, snowballs, even on a snowy winter's day, must surely be the least! . . .

"Tom Thacker! Tom, I say!"

Then the shot and the shudder.

Or did the shudder precede the shot? Certainly a shuddering of the soul possessed me at hearing my own name uttered in that ghostly atmosphere where I, the victim of an ill-organised train-service, was a chance and absolute stranger. Swift on the spiritual shivering followed the bodily. I turned sharply. A little shadow seemed to waver behind a pillar, a stifled giggle to flicker in the gloom. At an appreciable distance an ancient verger pottered among the monuments of the great dead. He solely shared my solitude. His face was like puckered parchment. One could not suspect such dry dust capable of the melting onslaught. Besides, I had had speech with him, and he had tasted silver.

Considering my position tactically, I turned my back upon the pillar, the ambush, I now felt assured, of something which had haunted me from the hour of my birth. And longer; but I did not at the moment realise this in its full significance. I did, however, realise that what the pillar concealed had compelled and eluded me since my descent on Welchester platform three hours previously, where I was told that my earliest connection with Bridestow was at 10.25 before midnight—a slow train landing me at my goal at four o'clock in the morning.

I was joining the housewarming of one of my oldest friends, five miles outside Bridestow; my invitation extended over a month's span, and covered Christmas and Twelfth-Night festivities. December the sixth saw me stranded in an unknown town with that strange sense of joylessness which accompanies the going agley of journey-plans in a chilly dusk. But something more than the customary forlornness was needful to account for my mood.

A kind of fatality, a pre-

vision of unseen forces at work, deepened it to a significance hardly communicable in words. I was not experiencing this for the first time, but I had never before experienced it in such an acute degree. The sensation itself recurred annually, lasting the greater part of each December. A desperate unrest possessed me, an unaccountable certainty that I was wanted Somewhere by Someone. At intervals I had the feeling that I was wanted less in another place than in another era. The distances of time rather than space dragged at the roots of me. My absolute ignorance of the cause of this periodical mood rendered me incapable of dispelling it; but no December within my memory had passed without the return of the disturbance, and I knew that if its motive-power were ever made plain to me by some clue of chance, I would obey it to the limits of unreason.

To outsiders my spiritual disease in this period was made accountable by a physical ailment which succeeded to the mood with a clockwork regularity. So surely as Christmas Day began to lengthen its shadows, so surely was I beset with a violent ague. Fever and shivering battled for possession of my body during some seven days, and expired together, leaving me a weak and despondent victor. The yearly recurrence of this illness was in itself something of a mystery; but it served ostensibly to justify the three-weeks' moodiness of which it was the apparent culmination. Yet inwardly I knew my mental disorder to be a thing in nowise dependent on the bodily affliction it preceded.

On the morning of my departure for Bridestow, I was still unaffected by my annual gloom; I had commenced my journey in sunlight, void of any psychic trouble; but very soon the cloud began to gather and grow dense, and at Welchester, where my train branched off from the Bridestow line, it was of an extraordinary oppressiveness. Even had the train been continuing to my destination, I knew that I would still have been compelled to alight at this place. On the platform, my baggage about me, I discovered the alteration of the train I had relied on to carry me to my friends that night. The prospect of the 10.25 was impossibly cheerless; of course I would spend the night in Welchester. But even without the warranting circumstances, I knew that I *must*. Something in Welchester wanted me.

Should he, said the porter, carry my things to the Station Hotel? It seemed the reasonable course; but I shook my head, and had them deposited in the parcels office. I had a premonition that I would not be sleeping at the Station Hotel that night.

I turned out into the streets, where pale early lamplight and dingy daylight struggled feebly with the more vivid mirage of light cast upward by the snow.

I told myself I must get something to eat, and made an

unhesitating track through the streets of the dim old city. I had heard much of the historic and romantic charm of Welchester, but I scarcely looked about me as I went. For I began to realise that I knew the charm and the city by heart. I had trod these ways before. I barely heard the sound of my own steps on the powdered pavements. It was as though they were trodden by a ghost. . . .

I came to halt. Not before hotel, or restaurant, or tea-shop — *that* had not been the primitive need directing me; but in front of the grand Cathedral towering in ancient silence on the city's marge. Beyond it stretched flat quiet fields, levelled to the frozen Wele, which holds the old cathedral town in a crook of its arm like a lover. One of these flats was dotted with gravestones; on another boys were playing, their voices and scufflings coming with an odd effect of distance. Some of them were sliding on the river, or chucking stones and lumps of broken ice across its slippery face. At yet a little distance the great fragments of Welchester Castle stood out against the sky. A dull glow from the west filtering through the ruined windows lit them into a semblance of life. It seemed possible to imagine men and women still habiting those windy chambers; and boys, boys. . . .

"What do you want?"

I uttered the words aloud, in mechanical answer to a thin sound in the air seeming to call my name — to a wisp of motion plucking at my sleeve. But I was mistaken; it had been a trick of the wind.

As I turned into the Cathedral the rumour of the great organ flooded me; then, sweet and shrill, the voices of choir-boys. Some service or practice was on. Disappointed, I turned away. I wanted the place to myself. All these others — worshippers, choristers, priest — had no business there. I must bide my time.

At the door I heard—did I hear?—the merest whisper.

"*Tom* . . ."

I paused, breath held. I looked back. Uncertain shadows danced about me.

"Imagination," I decided; "I'll get something to eat and come back again." And I repeated, not in my thoughts, but under my breath, like an assurance: "I shall come back again."

I made a tour of the great building, turning my back on the west where the country stretched into the open. Streets lay to the east, and shops too, I supposed, for by an angle of the east wall I heard the clinking of an anvil.

"There'll be a bakery near the smithy," I remembered, and turned the corner. But there was no smithy, only another angle of the Cathedral wall, an unfamiliar angle that protruded itself like an impertinence upon me who knew by heart each stone of this beloved building.

I could no longer hear the sound of iron on iron, but I had come right for the shops, of a sort. Little, mean, crooked

streets like crippled beggar children huddled for warmth under this aspect of the Cathedral. I turned down the nearest, an ill-lit alley, crowded with poor shop-fronts, at the door of one of which a figure was standing. I quickened my step, and she moved instantly to meet me, hands outstretched a little, such a small, frail slip of a thing: until she was quite close I was certain she was a girl-child, and then I saw her for a bent old woman. She came to an abrupt stop as our eyes met, and hers were dim and startled.

"I beg your pardon, my dear," she said in a bewildered voice.

She was a very sweet old lady.

"Where can I get a cup of tea, mother?"

"Will you come in?" She indicated her shop-door, above which the sign "M. VENN" was just readable in half-obliterated paint.

"Is that your name?" I had an obscure feeling that there was some mistake.

"Yes, sir." She was recovering from whatever had troubled her in our encounter.

I entered the little shop. It was shabby, but exceedingly clean. Behind the counter, where loaves and cakes were sold, was entrance to a tiny parlour. Here she served me at a ridiculous price: she ran out for eggs and fresh butter and a rasher of ham, and laid the bills rather shyly beside my plate as being no part of her concern; she held herself responsible only for the tea, the brown rolls, and the really delicious home-made cake. She waited on me tremulously. We said very little. As I rose to go she asked—

"Was it all right, my dear?"

I assured her it was. It was as much as I could do not to kiss her. There were tears in her eyes, and the same trouble seemed to stir in her that I had noticed at first. Her two old hands strayed out as though to keep me. I was reluctant to go; yet one other call was stronger in me.

"Good evening——" I hesitated, glanced at her left hand, and added, "Mrs Fenn." To which she answered in a subdued way, "Good evening, sir," and coloured faintly, and hid her wedding-ring beneath her apron.

When I turned at the end of the mean little street, she was still at her door.

People were streaming out of the Cathedral now, and for a little while I loitered about the big graveyard. Many of the tombs were old out of knowledge. In a remote corner a couple of graves had been recently dug up; ancient tenants were to be displaced by new. Their crumbling headstones lay propped against a bank. One could not read the dates and inscriptions upon them: the weather had read them too often, had worn the pages blank. . . .

I turned into the Cathedral.

The verger was there and, confound them, a few visitors. A stupid hour for visitors, cried my impatient soul; what could they hope to see in this light? Later I judged them to be American tourists "rushing" Great Britain, each half-

hour planned in advance. Welchester's allotted morsel fell unfortunately; but the Cathedral is one of England's sights, and one could always say, you know, that one had not missed it.

The verger was telling things to his party. I walked towards them, not because I wished to hear, but because they were centred round the precise spot in that vast and beautiful building where my heart was beating.

"See here, Helen — the *cunnin'* mite!"

"Oh, the cutey! Who is he, anyway?"

"I guess he's that baby priest thing Mr Levant told us be sure not to miss—now where is it?"

She turned to the inevitable Baedeker, but Master Verger was before her, a lean finger on the tiny stone effigy that was the momentary point of curiosity.

The Boy-Bishop has slipped from the memory — which means from the heart—of a world that needs him no more. Bluff King Hal struck him a buffet; Mary resuscitated him; and Queen Bess killed him for good. But for years, numbering their hundreds, there was no choir attached to the Church or the private chapels of the nobility that did not each December elect its mimic Bishop, whose term of office lasted from Saint Nicholas to Childermas. He had his trappings, his dignities, his parades; such authority as the Bishop exercised in the world of clerics was his above his youthful comrades; he even preached to them in the great Cathedral. It was a three-weeks' festival this of the Boy-Bishop, with enough of the colour of pageantry and quaint licence to make it attractive to the boyish troop it concerned: a child's mummery, smiled on and sanctioned by Mother Church, who doubtless derived her own benefit therefrom. It was said that if the little chosen chorister died while still bearing his honours, he was buried with the full dignities of his estate. Some antiquaries have disputed this point; but in the Cathedrals of Welchester and Salisbury tiny child-effigies bear out the truth of it. No visible inscription supported the claims of the little figure our verger droned of; but here he was, a child in the midst of four great monuments bearing the names of princes of the Church —historic names.

"And what do *you* believe?" one of the fair Americans attacked her guide.

He coughed dustily. "It may be so, miss, and it may *not* be so. They do say as there are other heffigies cast in a minute mould to be seen elsewhere — such as knights and what not, full-grown men, you understand me, but carved smallish for convenience as it were. However, there it is."

Yes, there it was, old sceptic. How else could this small accident have crept in among those stately prelates but as their brother? A flash of ridiculous wrath passed through me. It was on the tip of my

tongue to tell them all about it . . . but about what? Ah, it was on the tip of my tongue, on the giddy verge of memory. I could no more grasp it than I could grasp that shadow dancing so oddly behind one of the great tombs.

"But don't you know his name? He must at least have a name!" the lady persisted.

"We have no evidence to that effect, miss," returned the verger with dry precision. "We possess the hinventory of his vestments, however. The register lies opened under the glass case to your right. The character of the 'andwriting is Gothic, and somewhat 'ard to decipher. They had no School-board in those days, miss." He paused a moment for the slight but inevitable snigger of appreciation, cleared his throat a little, and ran over the list in his guide's monotone, without glancing at the protected parchment. My eye travelled down that antique document with ease. . . .

"*Imprimis*, myter well garnished with perle and precious stones, with nowches of silver, and gilt before and behind.

"*Item*, iiij rynges of silver and gilt with four redde precious stones in them.

"*Item*, j pontifical with silver and gilt, with a blew stone in hytt.

"*Item*, j owche broken silver and gilt, with iiij precious stones and a perle in the myddes——"

"They appear not to have considered pearls as precious stones," one of the young ladies observed.

"Them was the days of ignorance and darkness, miss; we know better now. — *Item*, a Crosse with a staf of coper and gilt . . . a vesture redde with lyons of silver and brydds of gold . . . one albe to the same with stars in the paro [that's the same as to say the apparel, miss] . . . one tabard of skarlett and a hoode thereto . . . one stayned cloth of the ymage of Saint Nicholas. . . ."

So he went on. And through his professional drone I repeated in my heart, "We know better now, we know better now. . . ."

"What a trousseau!" "Helen" was speaking. "But I wish I knew his name."

"You wouldn't be much the wiser for it, miss." Master Verger evidently resented the implication of his own ignorance. "We now pass on to the Grinling Gibbons Screen, carved in the year——"

He meandered to some other glory of the Cathedral. Its beauties were barely visible by night, and his little tribe followed eagerly. I stepped across Miss Helen's shadow as she passed. For the life of me I could not help it.

"His name, madam," I said, "was Nicholas Cope."

She eyed me in faint astonishment. "Oh, thank you; that's very interesting." Acknowledging me with a bow, she passed on, puzzled.

Yet less so than myself. Why had I said that? How did I know? But I did know.

"*Tom!* . . . *Tom* . . ." breathed the elusive whisper that was one with the elusive shadow. I slipped behind the tomb; but it was too quick for me.

The verger looked back, expectant of me. I approached and put a half-crown into his palm.

"I'll wander round by myself a bit; I know this place."

"That will be quite as you please, sir, I am sure." This was he at his most affable. I dropped the party and went in chase of my shadow. I had not lied. I knew the place, though I had never set foot in it in my life.

My shadow had vanished. It was playing hide-and-seek with me. I sensed the jolly little soul of mischief in the atmosphere.

"You sha'n't escape me," I muttered. "I'll get hold of you somehow. . . ."

The droning voice wandered farther off, farther. The party took leave. Through a high open window I saw stars on a frosty sky. Inside the Cathedral the light was very dim.

"*Tom! hi, Tom! Tom Thacker!*"

There was my name in full confessed. My shadow knew me. I would know him or die. The verger was approaching slowly.

"*Tom Thacker! Tom, I say!*"

And then! the villainous snowball full in the nape, and the darting shadow to the column's shelter, and the muffled laughter. . . .

This was the moment for manœuvres. And I, as I have said, turned my back on the certainty of that concealing column, and loitered in a wide careless circle until I had gained the right side of it, back still turned. But my unconscious ally, the verger, guarded the other side, and I had my prisoner between two fires. I leapt round and was on him — on whatever the column had been hiding.

"Now then, you young beggar!" I breathed in a triumphant whisper.

And it was no shadow—or was it? ah, but none to me! Two quick young hands were up about my neck, an eager cheek was pressed against mine, and the answering whisper was half a sob, half a laugh.

"Tom! Tom! *dear* old Tom! I knew thou'ldst come this year."

"Nick!" I said. And for the first time I began to have a glimmer of the need that had drawn me to Welchester, that had been drawing me back since the day, centuries past, when Nicholas Cope died during his term of office.

The verger was close upon us.

"Look slippy!" said Nick. Hugging my arm he dragged me away, out of the holy shadow into the holy starlight. The snow crisped under our shoes. Nick looked up, a grin all over his jolly freckled little face.

"Say, old Tom, I got thee a good 'un, did not I?"

II.

I looked down at the sturdy boyish form trudging beside me in the hose and jerkin of the fifteenth century.

"Yes," I assented, "you got me a good 'un. And now, my young gentleman, we'll have this out. Who are you?"

"Who I be?" ejaculated he. "Dostna know me? Thou rotter!" He executed a little caper under the stars. "Oh, Tom, isna this snow just *bully!*"

"Hold hard!" I said. "Where did you pick up this stuff? Surely this wasn't your fashion of talk?"

"No, beshrew me!" laughed Nicholas Cope. "Thou and I were wont to mangle speech in other wise, ha, Tom? Dost remember how old Withun would rate us? 'Murtherers o' the honest Saxon!' a' called us. (I loved him, though.) But Lord! the kind worms they do eat holes even in my old stones within yonder, and so I hear what I hear. I'll tell thee what I know, shall I? 'Corking' and 'lemon' I know, and 'skidoo' and 'cute'—why, I be called cute a dozen times a day o' Junes, Tom."

"These are all Americanisms," I said.

"Very like. It be a friendly talk to hear in one's lonesomeness."

"Are you very lonely, Nick?"

"Oh, Tom! . . . an I'd but lived two days longer I'd ha' been buried among the children."

"Poor old chap."

"Out here—" we were crossing the graveyard now—"it be jolly at all seasons. Earth she's a kind guardian, a' be full o' cracks. Can hear the birds sing, and boys a-quarrel, can watch the roots o' things and little live beasts, ha? Oh, but within there, all amid those four stern preachers, that lie so strait and pompified from March to February! 'tis, 'Peace, peace, thou restless imp!' if one but turn to ease a cramp. I would I hadna died a bishop, Tom."

"Never mind, Nick. Here you are, escaped."

"Ay. This is my holy-day. Three weeks, and thou, and the snow all together! isna it jolly?"

"Nick," I said, "who was I?"

"Lord, what small memories men have," said he wistfully. "I did think thee jesting a while back. Dost truly not remember?"

"No facts, Nick. Only that we loved each other."

"That be fact enough, I guess. I'll mind thee of the rest. Oh, we've days before us! Thou wert my younger when I died, and now, ha, ha! Tom's got hair on's face. Thou dost look odd i' thy beard, Tom! Is't a fearful bore to clip and trim? I warrant it be sport—I would I had lived beard-long. Wilt let me see thee at Master Barber's, Tom?"

"But Master Barber will see you too."

"Nay, only thou. Others be so blind, they canna see me; and numb, they canna touch me; and deaf, not to hear me."

"And why am I not blind and numb and deaf to thee, Nick?"

My hand was lifted to a warm mouth.

"We loved each other," answered Nicholas Cope.

III.

"Where are we for, old fellow?" I asked.

"We be for seeking my owche," said Nick soberly. "I lost it, dostna remember? *Thou* shouldstna ha' forgotten that, Tom. Thou'lt help me, wilt thou? I must find my owche—I *must*." He gave a little sigh.

"Why, Nick?"

"They say I shallna sleep in peace till it be found again. The sin's a shadow on my immortal soul, they say. And so year by year I must walk, and go a-looking for my owche." He sighed again, then kicked up his heels and grinned out of the corner of mouth and eye. "Silly asses! who wants to sleep in peace? Us was ever cutting capers o' nights when old Withun wasna spying. Tom!" he wheedled my hand. "Thou'lt bide past Yule and go treasure-hunting, ha? Great nights we'll have, and none to say us nay. Thou'lt bide, Tom?"

"To the death, Nick!"

"Ay," he said softly, "bide till then."

"I'll find a hotel near the Cathedral, if there is one."

"Oh no, Tom, not an hostel. Bide with Marget."

"Marget?"

"Ay, Marget of the bakery, her that was Marget Catton, and then was Marget Fenn. (But that was after *my* time.) Oh, thou hastna forgotten Marget the Smithy's daughter?—Tom, thou *art* a rotter! And thou and she so jolly thick—she liked thee best of the bunch of us, and we all so keen on her as we were. Come, Tom, think, Tom! I punched the heads of half the choir for thy sake because they were mad about thee and her, and—thou wastna *very* spry at punching heads thyself, Tom."

"Thank you, Nick. And weren't you keen on Marget, too?"

"Oh, well . . . pretty keen. But I loved thee best, and so did she."

"And after all the baggage went and married this Fenn chap, confound him."

"Thou mustna miscall young Matt, Tom. I couldna ha' got thee out o' the water without him, not for all the little Princeling's help, and Geoffrey Appsley had made himself scarce, the dirty funk."

"Well, if I owe young Matt my life I suppose I must forgive him Marget. How came I in the water, and what was the Princeling doing there?"

"Lord, what wasna he!" Nick chuckled. "A nice mess that was for all of us, and if Geoffrey had but taken his licking like a man——! The Prince was no funk, nay, it wasna Ned's fault."

"You've still left me in midwater, Nick," I said patiently. "I'll go under without a helping hand."

"That's where Matt o' the Fenn comes in; and so we'll to Marget's, because 'tis closing time. Keep thy hair on; I'll mind thee of everything afore the bells ring in the Christ.

Race thee to Marget's, Tom Thacker!"

He bounded away, shouting and tossing back his hood, a boy out of school, primed for games and mischief. And I—raced after him, and so we arrived in a breathless laughter at the little bakery where I had supped, and Nick pommelled on the door, and I clouted him over the ear and knocked decorously. Margaret Venn opened to us, and inquiry changed to welcome in her old eyes as they met mine. Of Nick dancing on the step, and snuffing up the scent of crust and cake in an ecstasy, she took no note.

"Mrs Fenn—Venn" (I corrected myself), "I shall be staying in Welchester a few weeks. If you have a room to spare, would you care to take a lodger?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" The soft face brightened. "I have a room—it isn't a very big one—perhaps you wouldn't——? Will you come in and look at it?"

"No, Mrs Venn, I will not. I'll be stepping up to the station for my traps."

"I am not very used——" she faltered.

I took her hand in mine by way of encouragement. "Don't worry, mother. I won't be a trouble to you."

"Oh, it isn't that, sir!"

We left her in a bewildered tremor of doubt and joy.

"Stations be great sport," observed Nick, trotting beside me in profound satisfaction. "An I'd my way over again I wouldna sing i' the choir, I'd be 'prentice to a driver of engines, ay, and I'd keep my throat shut lest they impressed me, as they did thee."

"Me? What did I find so impressive about 'em, whoever they were?"

"Now thou'rt talking gabble. *Impressed* thee, I said."

"And impressed me I heard. So comb out the tangles."

Nick groaned and rolled his eyes. "Thou canstna help being a dunderhead, old Tom. But for all that, thou hadst the sweetest voice in the choir, and if thou didna want to be impressed in my Lord Bishop's service thou shouldst ha' kept thy throat shut i' the lanes and left the birds to their singing. Well! what a mess o' tears and trouble thou wast when they brought thee into the Castle court afront of a rider on a big horse. 'Here be a nightingale to house wi' the thrushes,' a' said; and they fetched Hugh Withun along, and thou didst sob and sob and call on thy mother. Dostna remember how the boys then about mocked at thee, the little brutes, and old Withun slashed out at 'em and said in his sharp cross voice, 'Tune up,' a' said, 'tune up!' And thou didst only sob louder, crying, 'Mother, mother, mother!' 'That's no nightingale song,' a' said. And thou, 'Tis all the song thou'lt have o' me!' And thou and he did ever after hate most heartily, and yet I loved ye both."

"Did *you* mock at me that day, Nick?"

His eyes flashed. "Never I! Never! Dostna remember, Tom, I gave 'em bloody noses when they were cruel to thee,

because thou wast so pitiful and never a strong one, and I was tough as Withun's shoe-sole. (*We* know how tough that was, eh?) And, Tom, I took thee into my bed that night when thou wast shaking so quietly i' the dark, lest the other lads heard thee." His underlip quivered a little. "I thought perhaps thou'ldst ha' remembered *that*, Tom . . . I told thee to take comfort. 'Tisna bad here,' I told thee, 'and I'll be thy friend,' I said. And thou didst ask my name, and tell me thine, and so fell asleep."

I slipped an arm about his shoulder. "Don't grieve at my poor memory, Nick. The big thing has remained alive between us these four hundred years and more."

"And oh, I've been a-weary for thy coming," whispered he.

IV.

I had the whole story on the following evening, as we sat together in the broken arch of the great window that had once lighted the banqueting-hall of the Lord Bishops of Welchester. Among the crumbled chambers laid open to the air owls flew and hooted like awakened spirits. They, and my little Ghost who sat dangling his heels over the broken ledge fifty feet above the earth, seemed to me the only real things in the world; the boys once more sliding and tussling on the frozen river in the distance became like ghosts of future ages—and yet, something in their calling voices rang with an echo out of the past. . . . Nick at my side nodded.

"Ay, shut thy eyes, and it might be our fellows again," said he. "Gregory, and Walter, and Ambrose, and all. Though 'twasna often old Withun would let us abroad to do as we pleased. A' kept our noses pretty close to our tasks, and when 'twasna book-learning it was Do-Re-Mi till our throats ached. This was the time of holy-day for us boys, though, and December was a jolly month from Saint Nick to Holy Innocents."

"Hoo! hoo! hoo!" A white owl whirred past our ears.

"Who? Who? Who?" mocked Nick. "So the boys cried that Saint Nicholas Eve afore I got my bishop's gloves. Gregory hankered for 'em, and might have had 'em for me. Little enow *I* was cut out for a Churchman, Tom! but I was the elder, and the leader in the choir (though none of us had *thy* alto), and Hugh Withun liked me, Lord knows why, for I would plague out his life seven times in a sennight. A' read me a lesson on my responsibilities when they dressed me up in my fine vestments. 'Bethink thee, Nick,' says he, 'thy fellows look to thee for ensample this three weeks, thy person is become as sacred as our Lord Bishop's own, and thou shalt officiate in the Church, and say a Mass on Holy Innocents; and so thou must forget thy

boy's body which is too prone to the frivolities of this world, and remember only thy immortal soul of which it is the rude casket. No pranks, Nick Cope, no pranks for thy credit's sake and mine.' 'I warrant thee, Withun!' says I, and poked at him with my crozier. Up goes his hand, itching for me. 'And leave my sacred person in peace,' says I; ''tisna for such as thee to scourge it this three weeks!' And I strutted up and down mightily pleased with my grand clothes, my mitre, and my rings, and my owche, and the alb and tabard worked in gold and blue and scarlet. A' shook his bony finger in my face, and says he, 'As ye will, Master Nick, but if thou do not prune thy manners, or if I catch thee running round the streets in thy episcopal gloves, or if thou be lax in school or choir (for all thy Bishopric), by so much as the winking of an eyelid—I will lay up such a leathering for thee *after* Holy Innocents as thou shalt remember me by to the end of thy days!' Thereat I laughed outright, for he had me fairly, and he did his best not to smile o' one side of his old puckered mouth, and says soberly, 'And now, whom wilt thou elect amongst thy fellows to be thy ministers this three weeks?' 'Tom Thacker shall swing the censer,' says I, and went on to name what others I would have, but there was no more smiles in him after that word."

"From the beginning he was jealous of your love for me," I murmured. A thousand tiny chambers in my heart were unsealing themselves as Nicholas spoke.

"If it was so," said Nick, "what a folly! A boy doesna love another boy and an old man in the same wise. Howbeit, thou wert my censer-swinger, and ever stood nighest me in all the jolly time that followed. Dost remember the procession to the Cathedral yonder for Vespers on Saint Nicholas, us all decked out so fine? and afterwards parading through the town from house to house, getting of monies in the name of Mother Church? and how—ha, ha!—I blessed them that gave liberally? and how we first knocked up the smithy that stood well-nigh in the Cathedral's self along the eastern wall, so that we boys would listen for the stroke on the anvil during choir-practice, and think on Marget instead of our parts——"

"Yes, yes! what happened to the smithy, Nick?"

"They reclaimed it, nigh two hundred years ago; it had been holy ground once, but fallen to ruins in *our* times, and the Lord Bishops got rents for it from traders and craftsmen and such; and later on *they* went, and the east aisle was restored. I miss the clang o' the hammer lying in my tomb eleven months o' the year. . . . Well, then, dost remember how Marget Catton came out o' the forge and ran alongside on the cobbles, with eyes for none but thee in thy new alb? and how Matt o' the Fenn laughed out at us when we came to his father, the baker's, and said, 'No man

shall ever trap *me* in the livery o' the Church!' and his father said grimly, 'Yet thou shalt come to a baker's cap for all thy wild ways'; and a' doled us a mean bounty wi' the left hand, whereas Catton, the big smith, had given us freely with the right. (So 'twas a stingy blessing Master Baker had o' Nicholas Cope!) And dost remember how well we were supped in the Canon's room?—I had a choice of six of ye to eat with me, and thou, be sure, wast there—white bread and cider, we had, and meat and cheese. Um, um! And the junketings and entertainments to follow! 'twas a rare season for us lads, and Yule to crown it all!

"But little notion had we of the festival time that Yule was to be. For all suddenly, when my term was nigh spent, and I was stuck half the day conning the sermon they had writ for me to speak on Holy Innocents (stupid stuff, not such as I'ld ha' preached out o' mine own mouth), came runners and riders to acquaint my Lord Bishop, a' was a good Yorkist, of the approach of who but Prince Edward and his uncle Earl Rivers, then northward bound for Ludlow Castle. And they were minded to bide in Welchester over Yule, at my Lord Bishop's entertainment. The to-do there was in kitchen and buttery and still-room! and the buzz and flutter among us lads. For we knew naught of the Princeling, save that he was a boy even as ourselves, and it set our tongues clacking and our brains a-wondering. Gregory thought young Ned would have naught to do wi' the likes of us. 'Princes may not herd wi' choir-boys,' said he. 'But they may with God's chosen,' cries Ambrose, his eyes all shining, as his way was when he spoke of the Church; 'they may wi' bishops!' and so nodded at me, sitting over my page, my head between my hands. 'Nick's teeth 'ld chatter in his silly pate if he had but to say God-den to the Prince!' scoffs Gregory, to draw me; and cries I, 'Twould take more than a prince to make *my* teeth chatter; I'm afeard of no twelve-years' boy alive. If I do not get some sport wi' young Ned I'll swallow my sermon.' 'Thou'rt liker to swallow it an thou *dost*,' says Gregory, 'and be swallowed thyself by old Withun to boot; and what Mass we sing o' Holy Innocents 'ill be for mercy o' thy soul, I think!' I've wondered since if Gregory called that speech to mind in after days.

"Well, ere Christ's Eve went out, my Earl Rivers came in wi' his train and Prince Ned and Geoffrey Appsley—a disgrace to the post of whipping-boy, that one!"

"Whipping-boy, Nick?"

"Ay. Art in a new trouble, Tom?"

"Till Master Appsley's post is made plain."

"Why, why! doesna there be whipping-boys in these days?" demanded Nick curiously. "Your princelings still be flesh and blood, I suppose? What happens when they get 'emselves into hot water?"

"They probably scald."

"Well, well, and well!" Nicholas scratched his pate and pondered the matter. "Yet it sounds fair enow. So they take their own leatherings for their own misdeeds, eh?"

"Why not?"

"*Princes*, Tom! The world's grown hardy. But it sounds fair, ay, it does. Why, in our day the princelings had their whipping-boys, that took their punishment for 'em when they had done this, that, or t'other and needed their souls purged; and Geoffrey Appsley was young Ned's deputy to cheat the devil. A great tough beast, and a clinking coward to boot.

"We didna have more than a glimpse o' the Prince that day as he sat at supper (they served it in public against custom, because o' the season and the occasion), and we boys sang i' the gallery the while—look how 'tis broken away yonder, Tom. But he seemed a merry young cock, and we liked the looks o' him. A' laughed outright at the subtlety the cook had devised in his honour, his own figure done as natural as life in painted jellies so as to make a boy's mouth water. 'I hope I taste as handsome as I do smell and look, my Lord!' a' cries; and our master answers, 'Y'are of the savour England loves above all others, my Prince.' 'Yet the red rose smells stronger,' says Ned saucily, and my Lord Bishop, in a stern loud voice, 'The red rose is dead and its roots are withered in this land.' (And the land smelled Tudor, Tom, not ten years later, ha?) There was mummers and dancing fools come after the feast, but us lads was packed off to bed betimes, and I lay cudgelling my wits for a way of getting at the Prince on the morrow.

"Yule o' course was brimmed from sun-up to sun-down wi' Masses, and banquets, and frolick, and what not; but there came an hour after noon when all the bustle was left to the underlings, and the great ones slept off the dinner they had sat at from ten till one o' the clock, and we boys were left to our devices — a rest-time, said Hugh Withun, because we had a little Mystery to perform before the Earl when supper was done. And it was in this hour Gregory scampered among us crying, 'Now's the time, Nick, to make good thy vaunt! They say in the buttery the Prince is shut into his chamber even as we, so fetch him out and we'll see what stuff he's made of.' I saw Gregory thought I dared not, but, 'Bide a bit!' I said, and I got into the full glory of my bishop's vestments, and even then I remember as thou pinned on the owche wi' the four bright stones and the pearl i' the middle, thou didst say, 'How ill this catches, Nick.' ''Twill serve,' I said, impatient to be gone. 'Be'st going *so?*' asked Gregory, and I told him, 'Ay,' for it was my notion I'd be stayed less i' the corridors if I met wi' any of the serving-folk, who had a big respect for my mitre, and none at all for my hood. 'Now,' says I, 'who will follow Daniel

into the den of the lion, for only the brave deserves the sport.' And one after another hung back, and thou alone stood by me, saying, 'I'll go where thou leadest, Nick,—and Nick,' thou whispered, 'let's go play after on the ice?' So I got our necessaries, and we crept away through the empty passages and down the little secret stair that gave on a postern in the menials' quarters. 'Twas a foul day without, dark drew early in, and that befriended us as we stole about the Castle wall. Erelong we were flinging lumps of snow at the window we knew to be the Princeling's. It fetched him swiftly; out comes his head and 'Who's below?' a' calls. '*Pax vobiscum!*' I pronounces, ''tis the Bishop's self.' He stares a little through the mirk, and then 'Thou imp!' a' splutters, and calls over's shoulder, 'Geoffrey, hi, 'tis the Child-Bishop come to give us a blessing'—and a second head cranes out o' window. 'I'll give thee better sport than prayers an thou com'st to me,' I tells him. 'What then?' says Ned. 'Good skating yonder,' and I point to the Wele, a sheet of ice as it is this day. 'What, hast skates?' a' claps his hands. 'Not skates of Holland,' I confesses, 'we must do it in the old style on sheep-shanks—I have 'em under my tabard — and we'll find some stick or pole at the river-edge. So get a move on thee, for the wind's jolly nippy.'"

"You're sure you said that, Nick?"

"As good as. I tell thee what, a chap canna keep track o' *all* the slang a' hears in four hundred years. Ned says, 'How will I come? the outer room is full o' my people in a stupor, and I'm no bird to fly through the air.' 'Ay, but on a rope o' sheets,' thou piped. And 'twas done in a twinkling, and four of us were running iceward for our lives. And when we reached the Wele we let up such a shout as I wonder did not waken my Earl Rivers a mile away.

"We had the place to ourselves, for in those days the commoners didna herd on the river where it crossed the Bishop's privy fields, only little Marget in her furred hood crouched there, blowing her blue fingers, and then I knew why thou'dst hankered for the riverside.

"'Twas Ned and Nick and Geoff and Tom and Marget betwixt us soon enow, I warrant, and a merry hour we had cutting capers and teaching the Court boys how to skate on sheep's bones, clumsy contrivances to them accustomed to the fine new contraptions from the Netherlands, but the more rough-and-tumble the better the sport, and we was soon all heated with laughter. We had but the two pair o' shanks, and it was while thou and Geoffrey took a turn and skated off, Marget atween ye wi' a hand o' either for safety, that Ned's eye lights on my bishop's finery and he would be up to new games. 'Let's try 'em,' a' says, 'and thou take my purple—I'll be Bishop to thy Prince awhile.' So I helped him into all the gear, and donned his silk jerkin,

though 'twas a sumptuary sin in itself for *me* to wear the purple — yet I vow neither felt a sinner, only a jolly boy; some things be hard to straighten, Tom. And a' strutted up and down and bade me do this and that i' the name o' the Church, and I defied him i' the name o' the Crown and avised him think o' Becket, and on that a' excommunicated me, and so I ran at him wi' his scabbard and gave him chase, and he fled like a hare, dropping mitre and crozier as he ran, but was sore cumbered wi' the robes — so at last I toppled upon him, and it was while we was rolling one over t'other that we heard thee scream.

"There was never a sight of thee when we looked; only in the dark distance we saw Geoffrey running like one out o' his wits, and Marget far-off, standing in mid-ice, crying her loudest for us to come. Lord! how we took to our heels, Tom, I yelling thy name till I could yell no more for very hoarseness. I misremember how we came at last to the black water amid the broken ice where Marget shook and sobbed; but I was there afore Ned, who was still all bothered wi' those beastly robes. 'Where?' says I to Marget. 'Down there,' moans she; 'Geoffrey did it; a' tried to kiss me, and Tom hit him.' . . . Oh, Tom, 'twas a bad quarter-hour that next! I i' the water where I found thee and held on to thee wi' one arm, but could no more than keep thy head up; and Ned full length on's stomach on the safe ice, gripping me lest I went under; but each time a' crawled closer, the edge o' the ice gave, and we were but youngsters,—we hadna the means or the muscle to get thee out. It could ha' been done had Geoffrey Appsley stayed, but he went crazed wi' fear from the moment he pushed thee under, and we never saw him again. We didna notice Marget run, but she brought help to us anon. 'Twas Matt o' the Fenn she'd found abroad i' the fields, and he had snatched up the crozier as he sped, and that wi' his strength an' cunning soon settled matters. Oh, Tom, how blue and bad thou wast when we laid thee out. I thought thee dead then; but we chafed thee and rubbed thee, our teeth all chattering vilely, and at last thou didst open thy eyes. . . ."

Nick paused.

The end of his story came with difficulty; but this, I gathered, is what happened. Somehow I was smuggled into our quarters, and, with the help of a friendly maid, got to bed. Both Nick and I were in a bad way, but my ague was further advanced than his. Ned was caught, but never gave us away, and for his truancy was condemned to a sound beating. But Appsley being nowhere at hand to take it for him, the Prince's governor demanded of Withun the name of one of his boys to serve in Geoffrey's stead. And Withun gave the name of the boy he loved the least, and one of the Prince's gentlemen was sent to fetch me.

Nick, who was in a mortal

scare for my life, and was battling with his chill until he might confess to Withun and make the best peace he could for us (for the prank was past hiding), asks—"What do ye want of Tom Thacker?"

"The loan of his body to salve the Prince's soul," laughs the courtier; and Nick looks grimly at the frightened choristers and says, "Well, I be ready," and goes in my name.

What followed is confusion. Nick, already in a fever, fainted under the ordeal, and came to himself on the bed he was never more to rise from in life. He recalls the end only through delirium—Hugh Withun's woe and fury at the bedside before he realised that the boy he loved was doomed; Nick's confession, and the old man's denunciation of the gross impiety of the prank; finally, the discovery of the loss of the owche from the holy paraphernalia, so hastily gathered together and smuggled into the Castle after the tragedy.

"Young sinful!" flares Withun in his favourite's ear, "I tell thee, till that sacred jewel be found thy ghost shall walk from Saint Nicholas to Holy Innocents. *Thou* to be a bishop, *thou* to preach a sermon to thy fellows — unfit! unfit! . . . ah, Nicholas Cope, Nick! . . ."

Nick never preached his sermon. When Holy Innocents dawned they were measuring him for his coffin.

V.

I wired my expectant friends that I was ill, and settled down to three glad weeks with Nick. Whatever entertainment was going forward in Bridestow, there was no such sport as that afoot in Welchester, no such nights as I and my boy comrade passed in company. But you who read must be boys again, remember much and forget more, if you would understand. The glamour of adventure was upon us; we had an actual treasure to recover upon an ancient clue, and we made it the occasion of big deeds. Whether the owche had been dropped in Castle, mead, or river was past determining; and who knew that it lay where it was dropped? When we had haunted every cranny of the Castle ruins, from precipitous turrets, reached over the chasms of one-time stairways, to strange musty dungeons explored with candle-lamps, where we stirred up the dust and litter of God knows what experience of eld; when we had dug the flats beneath the stars, and hunted their dim and endless trails in the pitchy dark; when we had made the perilous voyage of the Wele on "skates of Holland" (O, joyous Nick! I bought two pair as soon as might be), had scoured its banks for miles on either hand, and dragged its danger-holes, bringing to light much curious matter, but never a hint of the jewelled owche; a million chances of its ultimate fate opened new ways for us.

We snatched at the thinnest pretext for wild trespasses which might have landed me in somewhat awkward places (it was Nick's secret woe that his ghostship rendered him immune from the delicious tremors of the transgressor); and his irresistible passion for door-bells resulted in more than one moment of difficult explanation for me, and unalloyed delight for the invisible truant.

One night when there was a bright moon we pitched our wickets on a deserted field, and Nick took his first instruction in the art of cricket,—a mystery he had pined to solve "these hundred years."

"To hear the choir-boys talk in summer," he said, "'tis somewhat after Handyn and Handoute, ha? but a sport to grow more crazed about than our old game. Lord! 'tis a hard matter to lie still i' the tomb and they chattering in whispers all about me! Didst ever see Jessop at the top o' his form, Tom? or Alf Minn, or Ranji, or W. G.? What's a Test, Tom?"

I forget how we decided that cricket practice was to assist in the recovery of the owche, but I know that Nick developed symptoms of a googlie which would have turned Bosanquet green.

So night slipped after night, merry and magical, and touched with an odd tenderness that did not lack its pangs as December drew to her close; and so Christ's Eve dawned and waned, and Nick and I lay under a hedge and watched the sunset fill the empty spaces of Welchester's ruins with magnificent pageantry. The golden west was like a call of clarions, and painted clouds rode past the hollow windows, a procession of brilliant images, scarlet that trampled the sky like horses' feet, purple that flowed in like a kingly mantle. And afar, that constant shouting of boys in the evening . . .

"Huzza! huzza!" Nick sprang to his feet whirling his arms. "Welcome to the Prince! Welcome, Ned, welcome! Shout for him, Tom—huzza!"

"Huzza! huzza!" I joined my voice to his; and a small violet cloud, half-fringed with gold, swam in the vacancy above the banquet-hall. . . .

That Christmas was a dark day, and shadows early filled the room in Margaret Venn's bakery where I sat awaiting the moment when my little Ghost would slip his tomb.

A party of singing children filed by the door, flooding the narrow alley with the strains of the Cherry-Tree Carol as they went; their voices passed into distance before they made an end. But one with a voice like the blackbird's pipe stayed under my window to give me the last words of the Christ-Child:—

"O I shall be as dead, mother,
As the stones in the wall;
O the stones in the streets, mother,
Shall mourn for me all.

Upon Easter-day, mother,
My uprising shall be;
O the sun and the moon, mother,
Shall both rise with me."

I ran down to reward the youngster, passing old Mrs Venn in the shop.

"Going out, sir?" she smiled.

"That boy deserves a sixpence, mother; he has a voice like honey."

"What boy, sir?"

"Didn't you hear the carols, Mrs Venn?"

"You'll hardly catch 'em now, my dear, they're long gone by."

I glanced at her, and opened the door on Nick lounging in its shadow.

"A glad Yule to thee, Marget Catton! A glad Yule, Tom."

"Can you still see the singers, sir?"

"Just the last of them. I say, what a wind! I'm leaving you in an awful draught, Mrs Venn."

I shut myself outside with Nick, who was rubbing his brows rather soberly.

"Merry Christmas, Nick! You're out early."

"Ay. The Great Ones are sleeping. 'Tis my occasion."

"What would you like to do?"

"Shall we go carolling for our friends, Tom? There be many set about getting pennies from them that hear, but few enow to sing out o' love to the deaf. Let's tune up some of our favourites, Tom."

"I'm afraid I've forgotten a good deal."

"Thou'lt get it again from me. Let us sing the Levy-Dew for Marget. She liked that."

"But Marget isn't deaf, Nick."

"Ay, she be—century-deaf," said Nick with a catch in his throat. "So come now:—

"Here we bring new water
From the well so clear,
For to worship God with,
This Happy New Year.
Sing levy-dew, sing levy-dew,
The water and the wine;
The seven bright gold wires
And the bugles they do shine.

Sing reign of Fair Maid,
With gold upon her toe,—
Open you the West Door,
And turn the Old Year go:
Sing reign of Fair Maid,
With gold upon her chin,—
Open you the East Door,
And let the New Year in."

"Where now, Nick?"

"To the graveyard," said he, and there we turned; and there, that Christmas afternoon, we lingered singing carols for the deaf.

For a newly-buried child Nick crooned the Virgin's Lullaby:—

"This other night I saw a sight,
A mayd a cradle keep:
'Lullay,' she sung, and said among,
'Lie still, my child, and sleep.'"

For an ancient lord he chose the Boar's Head Carol:—

"The boares head in hands I bring,
With garlands gay and birds singing;
I pray you all help me to sing,
Qui estis in convivio."

Old words and airs came back to me in fragments as we crept among the graves in the falling darkness.

"Here be some of our fellows, here lies jolly Gregory," said Nick presently, as we found ourselves in the oldest part of the burying-ground. "Let's give 'em a rouser:—

"'The shepherd upon a hill he sat,
He had on him his tabard and his hat,
His tar-box, his pipe, and flagat;
And his name was called jolly jolly Wat.
For he was a good herd's-boy,
Ut hoy!
For in his pipe he made so much joy.'"

There are ten verses in the Shepherd's Carol, and we sang them lustily from start to finish:—

"'Now may I well both hope and sing,
For I have been at Christ's bearing;
Home to my fellows now will I fling;
Christ of heaven to His bliss us bring.'
Ut hoy!
For in his pipe he made so much joy."

"Gregory set store by yon," said Nick. He lay on his face and knocked the bitten grass. "Hillo, old boy, dost hear?" he called. "Tom," he sat up looking around with puzzled eyes, "what be they up to wi' the graves here? They be all digged about, and their stones down-turned."

"I think they've been shifting some of the coffins, Nick. I noticed it the day I came."

"Then 'tis a howling shame!" cried Nick. I heard his teeth chattering as he spoke. "Ay, 'tis! Why canna they leave old bones in peace? Hugh Withun lay yonder—see, even *his* monument uprooted too!" He ran forward and caressed the rotting slab that lay beside a pile of rubbish; broken earth and stones and splinters.

"Oh, Withun, where dost be? Can I not sing for thee as for the rest? Wilt never hear thy bad boy's voice again?—

"'There is no rose of swych virtue
As is the rose that bare Jhesu.
Alleluya!'

"Which of all this dust be *thou*, Withun? laid open thus to the bitter air! . . . Tom, is that thee shivering?—

"'For in this rose contained was
Heven and erth in litil space;
Res miranda!'

"Sing, Tom, sing wi' me, for I canna keep my teeth steady. Try to like him, Tom, a' loved thy voice.

"'By that rose we well may see
There be one God in persons three;
Pares forma!

The angeles sungen the shepherdes to
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gaudeamus!'

"What be this here?

"'Leve we all this wordly mirth,'

[Look, Tom!]

'And follow we this joyful birth.
Transeamus!'

"Tom, what *is* it?"

VI.

He handed me a small and curious object: it appeared to be a box of iron, but a box that had no opening, being soldered about lid and hinge until one might have supposed it solid, but that something rattled within when it was shaken.

"Where did you find this, Nick?" I put my hand to my head, which was beginning to ache violently, and the wind cut through me with unendurable sharpness.

"Among yon rubble. Dost think thou canst prise it open?

My hands be so cold I canna put strength to it, yet my brain's like a stew full o' pepper. Do let's get at the innards, Tom."

"This needs tool-work, Nick. I'll have it opened to-morrow, and you shall see it in the evening."

"Ay, wilt thou be here?" said Nick, staring strangely.

"Yes, of course, old fellow. I say, get under my coat—this wind is freezing."

I felt his small body shaking and burning against mine.

"Art *very* angry wi' me?" he asked suddenly.

"I, Nick!"

"I know 'twas a folly, I know I shouldna ha' gone abroad in my gear, and the gloves too. Thou didst warn me o' that, but I was ever breaking rules. Withun, lift me up, the breath catches in my ribs."

"Nick. . . . Nick!"

"Ay, be thou not vexed wi' me, nor wi' Tom Thacker—see to Tom, wilt thou, Withun? he was never a tough one like me. I'll find my owche, old Withun, when I be better, I'll seek day and night till it be found, I will na rest till then. . . . Dost thou not say 'tis a sin o' my immortal soul until my owche be found? How shall I rest till then? . . ."

I prefer not to dwell upon the profound misery of the hours that followed. My annual illness had me in thrall, and Nick was in worse case than myself. He did not recognise me again. I do not remember how we parted, I only recall finding myself in the hands of old Mrs Venn, and the darkest terror of that delirious night lay in the thought that the morrow might bring to me no Nick at all.

In the morning, to the woe of my kind nurse, I insisted on getting up. She must have found me a bad patient. I declined a doctor with vehemence; he would, I knew, forbid my outgoing. When Mrs Venn saw me make for the door she wrung her hands.

"You'll catch your death!" she moaned.

"But I must go. I must find a smith."

I know she thought me out of my wits.

"What for, my dear?"

"I must get this open to-day." Nick's find was in my hand. I had made a promise, and its fulfilment was the last grace I could show him. It seemed to me as though I dared not go to meet him with that small casket still unopened.

"But it is Boxing-Day, sir," she reminded me.

"Well, I must get hold of someone.'

"Give it to me," she said soothingly. "I'll see to it. Go sit by the fire now, do, my dear, and take your gruel."

In an hour she had returned, and laid the box beside me, its lid wrenched off. I did not examine the contents until I was alone. First a slip of parchment, scrawled with Latin in a crabbed and ancient hand —one sentence only—

"*Lord, in the Day of Judgment when this sin shall come to light, have mercy on the souls of Hugh Withun and Nicholas Cope.*"

I knit my brows and tried to understand it. But the puzzle was beyond me. "This sin." What sin?

Returning to the casket, I shook out its sole remaining contents: an antique brooch of beaten gold, set with four dulled gems and a pearl in the middle.

VII.

Nothing now would have kept me from seeking Nick this day, and I prayed from my soul for a glimpse of him — an instant's respite only in which to restore to him the lost treasure that would bring him joy and peace.

When dusk came I watched my opportunity, eluded my nurse, and slipped out, muffled in my warmest things. In the pocket of my greatcoat lay the thrice-precious jewel.

I looked for Nick first about the Cathedral grounds, but he was not there. Then I turned in the direction of the Castle, and amongst the ruins I found him—stretched out on the floor of the room where, he had told me, we boys had been wont to sleep. He was flushed and breathing heavily, and seemed half-conscious only; but my step aroused him, and he welcomed me with eyes too bright.

"Where hast been so long?" he said.

"Nick, I've news for you, good news!"

"Ay, but let me speak. Oh, I have forgot my sermon, and Holy Innocents is hard upon us. When is it? To-morrow? Nay, next day. Bring me my sermon to con, I shall make hash of it else."

"Never mind your sermon, dear old chap. Listen——"

"Ay, let sermon go. I shallna speak it, I reckon. Now tell me, Withun"—(the name was an arrow in my heart)—"tell me *truly*, if I die afore my owche be found, must my spirit walk from Saint Nicholas to Childermas —must it, Withun?"

"Yes, but, Nicholas——"

"Withun! Withun!" Two feverish little hands gripped me. "Let me not die afore my term be out! let me not, Withun. I do na want to be buried among the bishops; I want to lie wi' my mates. What will I do the year-long in that solemn place, that house o' stone where the sun so rarely comes? Lonely I'll lie there, and full o' longing. I be a boy, I be no bishop— I want the earth and the air, and the moon and the sun, and the sound o' boys' feet trampling in the grass, and the call o' boys' voices in the playing-fields, and the hearts o' my fellows beating wi' mine under the living sod. Oh, Withun, shall I die afore my term be

sped? Lift me a little—the breath hurts still—I want to see thy eyes to tell me truly . . . I canna see them, they be too wet. . . . Ay, well. So I must lie i' the church wi' the old ones and the great ones, I that be young and small; but, ha, ha! Withun! I shall a little cheat 'em! I shall escape 'em once in a twelvemonth, eh? I shall get my holy-day come each December, eh? I have thy word for that—my three good weeks to seek the owche I lost; oh, never, never, never be it found! . . .

"What was thy news?"

"My news, old fellow?"

"Ay, thy good news, Withun."

"Why . . . that Tom Thacker's better, Nick, and sends his love."

"Give him mine, Withun. Look to him kindly, Withun. Oh, Withun, lift me up . . ."

But there was nothing to lift. The ghost of Nicholas Cope slipped through my arms.

VIII.

Repassing the Cathedral, before I turned the angle of the East Wall I heard an anvil clinking in the night. "Catton's at some work," I thought. My hand thrust into my pocket closed on the fragments of the iron box whose contents Withun had carried to his grave. "To-morrow I will get this re-soldered." I came round the corner where Catton's forge once stood.

The cold wall only met me, the ring of the hammer fell silent, . . . but was it imagination that an old spare figure, with a face like puckered parchment, slid past me out of the shadows hugging a secret object to its breast? . . . I turned my head and there was nothing.

"God rest your soul, Hugh Withun," I said, "and let us be friends at last; for I too have found our boy's lost owche, and taken the guilt of its loss on my own shoulders for his dear sake."

That night in my room I added three words to the Latin script upon the parchment, and the tiny casket, which was soldered in my presence on the morrow, contained, besides the jewel, a plea for mercy on the souls of Hugh Withun, Nicholas Cope, and Thomas Thacker.

IX.

On the morning of the 28th I attended service in the Cathedral. It was against my nurse's wish, but my chill was abating, and this was to be my valediction to Welchester. Nothing now detained me, and I meant to join my friends in Bridestow with as little delay as possible.

As I entered the doors I passed my old verger, and a

moment later heard him whisper to one behind me—

"Your gentleman still looks very bad."

"He's better than he was, Mr Withers," murmured a voice I knew, and glancing back I saw that Margaret Venn was following in my wake. She looked a scared apology, but I smiled and waited for her, and we took our seats together.

I could not fix my thoughts on the service. Concentration is difficult in certain periods of convalescence. Most of the time I sat with my hands over my eyes, thinking of Nick lying not far away, and wondering whether he found the sermon dull. The text, as being appropriate I suppose to the day, was "Suffer little children . . ." I hardly heard the words, but the voice of the preacher was of a wonderful sweetness. . . .

. . . . . .

A soft hand touched my knee. I uncovered my eyes. Beside me sat a little girl, a charming child, rosy and smiling. I had not observed her before. Nor had I observed that the entire congregation was one of children, their eyes, alert and friendly beyond the wont of youngsters in church, all fixed upon the pulpit. No, there was one man among the flock, a lean old fellow, in a black robe, sitting in a far corner; and his eyes also burned upon the preacher. The children were dressed in a fashion familiar to me; I glanced down at my own long hose. . . .

"*Tom!*"

"*Hello, Marget!*"

"*Doesna he look splendid!*"

Then I, too, turned to the pulpit, and there saw Nicholas Cope in all his bravery. He grinned across at me, and had ado, I knew, not to wave his hand.

". . . and lastly," said Nicholas Cope, "I tell ye this. Christ has a liking for fun and good sport and a laughing heart, A'll damn no boy for pure mischief, so it *was* pure mischief—for, fellows, mischief can be crooked too; and we all know, better than them that leathers us after the act, whether ours was the crooked sort or no. And, another thing, a chap must learn to take his own leatherings—ay, though he be a prince he must!—and to bear 'em wi' a good grace and not whimper, for 'twas up to him if a' chose to swallow the jam afore a' gulped down the powder, and don't ye forget it. It's cheek o' me to be up here talking morality at ye when ye all know me the worst truant o' the pack: I never could keep my mind o' my book when window was open and earth called . . . but God made the earth, and man only made the lesson, an' I don't believe He's angry wi' a chap for loving His work the better o' the two—He shouldna ha' made boys and ice to be in one season if He hadna wanted 'em to come together. May He forgive me my sins; I've had a jolly good time, and I canna think He grudged me. For Christ's Self was one time a child like us, and that's why A' keeps a smile for our mirth so well as a tear for our sorrow.

"Let us now sing the Carol o' the Cherry-Tree to the glory of the Virgin and her Child—up wi' ye all, and lustily:—

"'Joseph was an old man
And an old man was he.'"

Voices of children, a bright wave of them, flooded the Cathedral to the roof. But something checked my throat, and Nick, I could scarcely see for a swimming in my eyes. I only knew that he was looking fixedly upon me through all the singing, and that before the final verse he was descending from the pulpit and coming my way. Beside my seat he paused, and his voice rang in my ear like a bell heard in a mist:—

"O I shall be as dead, Tom,
As the stones in the wall;
O the stones in the streets, Tom,
Shall mourn for me all.

"Upon Saint Nicholas next, Tom,
My uprising shall be,
O the sun and the moon and thou, Tom Thacker,
Shall all rise with me. . . ."

. . . . . .

"Are you not coming?—do you feel so bad, my dear?"

The congregation was almost dispersed. Margaret Venn and I alone kept our seats.

"In a few minutes, mother. No, I'm as right as rain—really. Trot home now; I'll be there soon to get my box strapped."

She left me; and I stepped along the empty grandeur of that place, once to touch in farewell the hand of Nicholas Cope, where he lay among the noble tombs of four of Mother Church's brightest gems, a pearl in their midst.

X.

On my friend's estate in Bridestow there is a well reported to be bottomless. Soon after my arrival I demanded an introduction to it, and my hostess, full of welcome and commiseration, led the way.

"Too bad, you missed the best of the fun," she chattered. "You don't look very grand even now—I hope you didn't come on to us too soon—however, we'll nurse you round as fit as a fiddle for New Year and Twelfth-Night. And next year you must be sure and be here for Christmas."

"I'm afraid you mustn't count on me."

"Oh, come, now!" She shook her head laughingly. "A prior engagement, I suppose?"

"Yes, a prior engagement."

"So likely, isn't it! Here's the well. You wouldn't believe how long it is before one hears the splash. Let's find a stone or something."

"This will do." I drew my hand from my pocket.

"What is it? (There! have you dropped it?) Nothing that matters, I hope. It's past recovery now till Judgment Day. Listen!"

Faint and far I heard the splash.

ELEANOR FARJEON.

BACKWYNDS OF THE BLUE RIDGE.

MIDWAY in the Appalachian System that reaches nearly from the St Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, where nature has run riot in her prodigality of chains and cross-chains of "dolorous mountain summit," there, where the corners of several States come together, stands the Blue Ridge, thrown up like a barrier at the back of the great Atlantic plain. Like its companion range, the Great Smokies, it takes its name from the atmospheric haze which ever bedims it when viewed from any distance. With an elevation of some four thousand feet, rising in some of its apices to over six thousand, it is the highest part of the North American continent east of the Rockies.

Climb the Blue Ridge from the plain by one of the "Gaps" which are found at intervals, and which are mostly rugged fissures formed by water erosion, with roadways precariously hung on to their sides, and you find that it is no ordinary mountain that you have ascended. There is no "go-down" on the farther side, but a vast billowy Hinterland, all once a forest, though now mostly cleared, but all still the very apotheosis of the unlevel. To get the fullest effect of the Ridge, and to carry away the deepest impression of it, one should approach it from behind. Seen from thence, the extent and the suddenness of the stupendous dip are sublime, giving a suggestion of the world's rim or jumping-off place. After sojourning in that rude highland, with eye and mind wearied by its seemingly endless upheaval, one who for the first time emerges on the Blue Ridge crest, with its glorious expansive panorama spread out beneath, can scarce refrain from venting his feelings in a shout — the shout of the prisoner gaining liberty—the Thalassa-shout of the sea-hungry Greek again beholding his beloved element. Here at last to the everlasting hills is an end. In that haziness away beyond the terraced spurs and foothills, you feel and know instinctively there are flat country and macadam roads and railways and towns, and other things pertaining to a twentieth century civilisation.

Away from your feet, like a long unpirned thread, runs the road, winding down and ever down the mountain face, till, dwindling to the thinnest drawn fibre, it is lost from view in the far depths. The drive down this declivity is taken with caution — brakes hard crammed on, and team well in hand. Even then, it is one that is pregnant with possibilities and big with thrills. The roadway, from the inner bank to the outer edge, has been closely gauged to the width of a vehicle, and the

wheel-track runs persistently close to that unfenced, unkerbed outer edge where the ground drops away at a desperate angle into the tree-tops and the general landscape. Even the local teamster keeps the best part of one eye in that direction. The curious stranger glues both eyes there; while the extra-timid passenger keeps his averted, or with discreetly closed lids. In the light of day that roadway is cut too *décolleté* to meet with his approval. A careful look-out has to be kept ahead for other vehicles, for only at certain points is it possible to pass. Many of the trees by the roadside have had slices chopped out of their trunks, indicating the severe wear and tear on brake-blocks and the necessity of frequently refacing them. Many of the Gap roads are kept up by toll levy, and their surfaces made good after rains,—as they well need to be. Considering the amount of wheel traffic passing over these Gap roads, and the apparent risks, especially on many of the bends, accidents are amazingly few. The draught animals of the country have much to do with this, being particularly docile and free from skittish ways. When the catastrophe of a waggon somersaulting off the road brink has to be recorded, it is generally the case that the driver was neither a novice nor a stranger to the route. It is averred that among the wreckage of the outfit, fragments of bottle-glass and a whiffed suggestion of alcohol are often noticeable, leading to a suspicion that the overthrow may have been brought about by the old and experienced jehu running up against some young and inexperienced spirit.

Many parts of the Blue Ridge have long been notorious for the stilling which was carried on there, mostly on the illicit plan. Of late years the business was very brisk, so much of the surrounding country having "gone dry," or adopted liquor-prohibitive legislation—and the less accessible clefts and corners of the Ridge were among the last places to be patrolled. Whisky made from maize, and brandy from apples, after the fashion of their forbears, were the fluids these distillers chiefly handled, and they could hardly conceive, in their crude casuistry, that their industry should be matter for anybody's or any government's interference. Their own production, high proof, hard and hot, was the one and only article to edify their home-trained palate, and they felt shy of more refined substitutes. Properly rectified and matured spirit was to them even as the Loch Katrine water, when first piped into the city of Glasgow, was to the old lady who had all her life been used to the Molendinar or some equally noisome local supply, and who characterised the new beverage as "puir fushionless stuff, wi' neither smell nor taste aboot it."

At the present time extreme vigilance is being exercised by

the United States officers in the Ridge country. Coppers and worms are being hunted for and destroyed, and the possessors taken in charge. Considering what sort of type some few of these old-timers are, and their readiness to employ powder and lead for enforcing their arguments on rights and personal liberties, the work takes resolution. It was the holder of a backlying Blue Ridge claim who, when inquiry was being made a few years ago by a State official as to land titles and abstracts, reached down his long-barrelled gun from its brackets on the rafters, and startled the interrogating official by remarking, "Thar's my title." It says a good deal for the tact of the raiding revenue men that they are performing their cleaning-up task with practically no blood-letting accompaniments. From one recent Court alone some twenty-five or thirty illicit ones of the "bootleg" proclivity were sent to government positions behind the bars for various terms. The days of "moonshining" in the Blue Ridge appear to be wellnigh over.

Between the Gaps there are rough "breaky" territories, populated only according to the capability of the soil to furnish the meagre living with which the native can make himself content. Wherever nature's schistose or silica top-dressing has not been entirely overdone, some family has found a foothold, and the signs of their fumblings and fiddlings with agriculture are seen wherever there is a likely spot upon which can be hung a corn-stalk, or on which they can sprout a bean.

Farming on these crofts is a prolonged and fierce warfare with nature, and the crofter warrior unfortunately has not enough of the gleam of battle in his eye to make a successful campaigner. Too often the spoils from the mountain battle-field are all too easily borne home.

Climatic conditions change with wonderful rapidity as one descends the Blue Ridge. On the top there is a bracing air and a moderately brief summer. On the face there are in places strips known as "Thermal Belts," where frosts are said to be unknown. During winter time the whole of the higher levels may be covered knee-deep with snow, while only a mile or two down the atmosphere may be balmy, and never a flake have fallen. The dweller in these genial regions is of the easy-going, listless kind that may be sum-totalled in the word "shiftless," —the kind that works by fits and fancies, and always happens to have one of these attacks just a short time behind the right and proper season. The owner of his own acres, he pays rent to no man, but among the landed proprietors of the earth he is certainly the "submerged tenth." "Po' White" the southern darkies contemptuously style him; and if his case is a specially bad one, they emphasise their expression with

the additional word "Trash." Though far from nomadic in his instincts, he is of the same Reuben-cursed genus as the chronic trekker, or mover of the West, whom he and his family much resemble in appearance, and who spends his life in a covered waggon, in continual search after a new Eldorado just over the divide. To comprehend what the agricultural expression "a light yield" actually means, one must see one of his feather-weight harvests.

That this combination of human shiftlessness and unkind surroundings is apt to beget family poverty goes without saying. Nevertheless, he is right royal in extending his hospitality to the stranger; for, with all his faults, he is ever good-hearted. "I'm pore but clever," he will assure you, signifying, by the last adjective, hospitable. His serene indifference to class distinctions, and his whole-hearted *bonhomie*, ring clear when he proceeds: "I'm from the upper fork o' Possum creek. Possum creek is a pore creek, an' they're all pore folkses on our fork; an' the farther up the fork the porer the folkses. My place is right clost to the head-springs. If yer ever up that way come an' stop wi' me."

His portrayal of things is a true one. As the physical features of the land shift gradually from fair-lying slopes, where the creek has opened itself out a bit on the lower stretches, and where the bloated aristocrat drives his waggon and pair of oxen, and occupies a board-built house, the people taper off in degrees of prosperity. At the other end is the "head-springs" fellow, who turns his field with a few of his family hitched to his "bull-tongue" plough, and lives in a log shanty where the advent of a glass window eighteen inches square would cause his homefolks to assume an arrogant air toward their neighbours. Indeed the scarcity of glass in architecture in some vicinities might lead an outsider to suppose that the old-time British window-tax was in vogue here.

Life and economics in these backlands are a study. It has been said that one half of the world doesn't know how the other half lives. It should have been added that a goodly number of both halves don't just rightly know how they themselves live. Our shiftless friend is one of these. To anyone save himself his harvest-field would be a depressing sight. Sepulchred there is the dust of a season's toil and a season's hopes. He had guessed and reckoned and calculated on that patch all spring and summer as to the return it would give; but it takes no guessing or other mental exercises now to tell that it will not go far toward the support of him and his family through the winter. Were he reflective or pessimistic he might feel cast down about it, especially if, in making comparisons, he looked down the creek, where the crops all show

the regulated improvement, one over the other, that the better conditions allow for. But he is not prone to reflection. He lifts up his eyes toward the creek source and blesses the Lord. The field will supplement the gatherings of "the old woman" and the kids, who through the summer have been not slothful in business. Besides the garden truck which they have saved, they have dried and cached bushels of apples, berries, chestnuts, chinkapins, and so forth. Pennyroyal, golden-seal, and other herbs and roots, have been scratched after and dug up in the woods, and have yielded their mite in store accounts. If in some cranny, on a lucky day, a bunch of "sang"—anglicè, ginseng—has been discovered, the family exchequer gets quite a lift. Then there are the chickens and the milk cow and the shoots on the oak mast, to all of which the old woman attends personally. She has learned the lesson, too, that Joseph taught to Pharaoh, to hold over the surplus of the fat year to make up for the deficit of the lean. Like the Red Indian squaw, she is more of the family prop and stay, and bears more of its burdens, than her big-chief husband, who finds more scope for his talents in pow-wowing away the time in company with a whittling weapon and a select assortment of big, middling-sized, and little chiefs. Albeit to a stranger the old woman may look sad-visaged as an owl and unobtrusive as a mollusc and not over robust, yet with a hoe or other implement she is a power in the land. The alpha and omega of her earthly existence is the raising of her family, and the doing her utmost to provide for it. In woodcraft, in barnyard lore, and in the treatment of common ailments, she is an encyclopedia, self-sufficient in most happenings and emergencies. Unlike so many of the managing sort of her sex, she has seldom anything of the scolding Xantippe about her. Abigail rather is she, meek as any household "general." The chances are she has never been ten miles from home in her life. Nothing of the æsthetic ever comes into her existence; no call of street parade, or remnant sale, or other city frivol, comes to her; neither does she wot of or yearn after further liberties or franchise rights. Conceive of her, if you can, ye rampant flaunters of the suffragette flag! Her little world is horizoned by the confines of the family croft, her little brave heart wrapped up therein, and therewith content. Situated on a corner of the farm is the little family necropolis, in which she expects one day to be gathered to her fathers-in-law,—the first and last city visit she is like to make in the flesh.

Beyond feeding her offspring, and doing the sewing and washing, the mother does nothing for them, for she, poor soul, has not the time. Neither does the father do anything, for he, poor soul, has not the inclination. The brood is raised

up, or dragged up, somehow, and it is wonderful, all things considered, what fairly civilised beings they eventually become. In hobbledehoy years the boy, as an individual, is apt to be wayward, and in the aggregate he is always sure to be so. The "Professor" in the little school has his trials. One of these trials is what is known as "dipping," or undergoing the indignity and unpleasantness of being bodily immersed in a stream. By this means the pupils bring a teacher in line with their views when they feel that the school needs a candy-treat, or a holiday, or other distraction. This hydropathic prescription, which has the authority of old establishment for its sanction, appears to be practised in various mountain districts. Some day, perhaps, up-to-date mountain schoolhouses will have suitable and convenient dipping-vats erected on the premises. Other forms of condign punishment for contumacy on the part of the "Professor" are reported to be customary, such as locking him into the schoolhouse, and even chastising him. Fortunately for the dominie, school term commonly lasts only two or three months each year, so he finds time to convalesce.

Large tracts of the country are wholly unfit for wheel traffic. The means of crop and general conveyance is there confined to human "toting-poles" and the ox-drawn slide. The waggon there is unknown, and the discovery of an impression of a wheel-tyre on a trail would arrest the eye, even as did Crusoe's discovered footprint in the sand. In default of a waggon or other wheel-carriage the slide serves as an all-purpose vehicle, and is made use of for bridal car-de-luxe, for funeral *cortége*, or for the distribution of stable litter, as occasion may require. A word anent it, in its capacity of passenger conveyance, may be said. The writer is qualified to speak thereon, for has he not been conveyed thereby? Once when footsore and tired, and with some miles down the mountain-side still to travel, he was tempted. The slide in question was like all other mountain slides—to wit, a couple of heavy timber runners, well turned up in front, with half a dozen cross-bars between, set high enough to clear average-sized rocks and roots. That was all. It combined strength of structure with the chaste simplicity and all the comfort of a hen-roost. There had been rain, and the rough track-road was wet and slippery. The owner of the slide allowed that it "mebbe was wet and slick, and washed some in spots," but he could always depend on old Buck and Berry to "ooze down mighty easy-like." The animals referred to looked sufficiently superannuated and horn-wrinkly to be discreet, and had about them enough condyle of bone contour to have done duty as a hat-stand. Certainly they appeared incapable of anything like unhallowed haste of movement, so the

writer decided to ride. It was arranged that in consideration of the ride he was to see that the load, which was composed of heavy fence-rails, secured to the slide by chains, did not shift, and it was to be his duty to "sing out" should they do so. Then we started. On the best parts of the road it was bad, and on the other parts it was terrible. When there was an extra steep and washed-out bit, the slide would shoot forward by its own weight, and the cattle would throw in the high-speed clutch, and take it on the schedule time of a whirlwind. They had no doubt been juggernauted on a previous occasion. The rails *may* have shifted. The writer somehow believes they did, but if he did any "singing out," it was involuntary.

On a slide excursion the interest in scenery or conversation, or in anything else but riding, is slight. You are mostly busy, very busy; and when it does come to anything like a smooth stretch, you put in time, praying softly and earnestly that Heaven will watch o'er you through the next rag-time. But it is generally best, at the first opportunity that offers, to get off and prosecute the rest of the trip afoot. You will thus avoid having to write off so much from your bodily account for depreciation. Mountain slide joy-riding will never likely become a popular craze. For many constitutions one "ooze" in a lifetime might be an overdose. The very footpaths in these parts are set about with dangers, and bristle with aggravations for the pedestrian. In addition to their wind-breaking gradients they are promiscuously supplied with shin-breaking stumps, ankle-turning boulders and pitfalls, and fallen trees. Also there is the footbridge, so called, over the wide deep-cut stream beds. Were it a flattened log, or even just a log that spans the yawning width, but it is a pole—a round and slippery, and a long and a nasty springy pole. Every native—bar the aged and halt—can walk it steadily and erect, with ease and nonchalance, but you experience trouble with it on all fours. Sometimes, too, the continuity is interrupted just before the pole reaches the farther bank, in which case you are presumed to be active enough to arrive there by a leap that would do credit to a kangaroo. No pirate of the Spanish main ever walked a passenger off anything more convenient. When, in place of a bridge, there is a ford and "stepping" stones, they are pointed or round, and always so very far apart, that on each lonesome one upon which you succeed in safely alighting you experience afresh all the novel and unhappy sensations of a marooned cat. At the conclusion of a mountain stroll one's admiration of Blue Ridge agility is intense.

Mountain dwellers nearly everywhere see such a limited amount of the things and such a limited number of the people

of the outer world, that when they do get a chance at them they make the most of it. They cannot let you casually pass by on a back road of the Blue Ridge. "In desert places when men meet, they pass not as in busy street." Their inordinate thirst for one's family history and their all-devouring stare may be found trying, yet these are their prerogative, and being universal, it is well to get used to them at once, and submit as gracefully as may be. If you should encounter a man who does not appear to be bursting with a desire to stop and engage you in conversation for the balance of the day, look compassionately on him. He is probably deaf and dumb. If you chance upon another who doesn't stop in his tracks and rivet his eyes on you, from the moment you heave in sight until you are hull-down in the offing, have a care that you don't run over him. He is stone-blind.

While it is true that the people in the main, though backward, are by no means unintelligent, yet there is a moiety still with benighted ideas so born and bred in them, that nothing short of the scalpel and the X-rays could root these from their composition. To bask in the irradiance of their society you must visit the farthest recesses of the Ridge. There you will find the school of scientists who hold that this terrestrial planet of ours is flat; and there, the distinguished savant who maintains that the sun revolves round the earth, and who would write a thesis to prove it, if he could but write his name; and there you will make the acquaintance of the eminent astronomer who has convinced himself that the moon will one night go out, if by any contingency the milky way resources for the green cheese supply happen to fail. There also is the chemist of advanced thought and deep research who will sagely remark to you: "It's a quare thing to me, but I've sort o' noticed for a while back that the better the dirt, the better the crop is liable to be right thar."

Besides the Professor already mentioned, the other public characters are the Preacher and the Doctor. The preacher is more than likely to be a "hardshell" Baptist, the denomination to which most of the church-going folk adhere. He is commonly just one of the brethren with the *furor loquendi* strongly developed, and who has studied for himself what rudimentary theology he knows. He holds services once a-month, and for the rest of the time is not much more in evidence than any ordinary layman. In his long rambling pastoral discourses to his flock, the further he can wander the less pabulum he can find them, and the more befogged he can leave them the better they think of him.

The old-time doctor, sans college training, sans diploma, sans everything but saddlebags,

is still to be found, though happily he is all but extinct. The qualified younger man has almost completely ousted him. Under the *régime* of the old practitioner, a case of sickness was hailed by the community at large as a great public function. Whenever it got noised abroad that there was serious illness anywhere about, —unless it was something like smallpox, that they were afraid of,—old and young of both sexes would gird up their loins and rally to the spot, to help, to advise, and to have a big time generally. Each dame on her arrival had to diagnose the symptoms afresh, and to confer profoundly about them with the doctor and the other old-wife doctors. Doubtless some of the old parties were experts in handling certain diseases, but, *quot homines tot sententiæ*, they all differed more or less in their prescriptions, so the majority of those most nearly in agreement had to rule. A late arrival with plenty assurance and tongue might upset the hegemony, and the course of treatment might suddenly be radically altered. Given a good constitution to start with, a reasonably complicated disease, and a full house, a patient could acquire as much clinical experience as in a whole course of walking the hospitals. In addition to his physicians, the sick person had the company of the unprofessional visitors, and the benefit of their morbid hark-from-the-tomb remarks. "Well now, jest to think how quick a body can be took bad. Ye look a'most like Aunt Marthy did when she got down, an' she only lasted three days;" or, "I've seed you have spells o' sickness afore, but it's ontellin' but ye mought make a die out of it this time." Such talk as this, coupled with the bustle, the banging of the door, the tread of heavy boots on the bare floor, and the odours of cooking and tobacco, could very materially expedite a demise. Typhoid and consumption are the most prevalent diseases, and the most fatal. Following in the wake of a case of typhoid, there is sure to be another in the same household, till the whole family has an attack. To all this the qualified doctor puts a stop, of course. General health on the Ridge is excellent, though for some inscrutable reason it is the fashion of the people never to admit to feeling quite well. Ask the most rudely healthy native you can find how he is, and nine times out of ten the reply will be, "Jest only moderate."

Beset with difficulties in the way of travel, and kept with nose always within sniffing distance of the grindstone, the Blue Ridge backwynder does not get much into contact with the world. Hence the "sot-fastnes" of his ways and views, and his unconcern of things outside of his beat. His ideas are microscopical. On one of the spurs of the Ridge, from where the view of distant mountain was so magnificent that the eye of the beholder

perceived nothing of the foreground or of the middle distance, but passed direct to the background of the picture, embracing the Unaka Range, the Grandfather Mountain, Mitchell's Mountain, and Clingman's Dome, all peaks of altitude that have found for them a place on the American map, the writer asked of an old toll-keeper if he was acquainted with the different heights in view, and if he could point them out by name. "I kin for sure," he replied; "that yonder," indicating a corn patch of rather pronounced perpendicularity in the proscenium right by us, "is the Widdy Sharkey's Knob; and that," pointing to another upright-looking croft, half a mile off, "they call Lige Pruit's Rise." Beyond was *terra incognita*, all outside of his world and not of his ken. His optic lens came to a focus where his limited mental range ended, and his vision gave out at the toe-joint protuberances of his own mountain-range foothills.

Here and there, in the timbered sections, commercial enterprise has reached out and planted down a portable sawmill, and is handling such of the oak, chestnut, poplar, and pine as is fit for ripping into lumber that will bear the expense of the laborious carriage to the nearest shipping point on the railroad. Only the choicest of the timber in the remote nooks will stand this, so the mills are moved from time to time to fresh belts of forest. These mills are chiefly owned by big companies, and our crofter friend, if he can call up the requisite energy, can find occupation while the timber is being got out in his vicinity. The "logging" or felling of the trees and cross-cutting the trunks into lengths, and the "skidding" or bringing down of these with teams to the mill-site, are the jobs offering. For his services the native either gets a cash wage, and swells in his feelings for the time being to the dimensions of a Crœsus, or else he takes his pay in planks, which he piles in a rick on his homestead and gloats over for some years, dreaming of the frame dwelling he will erect. This, if and when it is at length erected, is apt, among the surrounding primitive structures, and in its rough-and-tumble setting, to resemble the gold button on the tow shirt. Somehow the plain old log shack, rough-hewn, one-chambered, chinked and daubed, hits the eye, in the eternal fitness of things, as the proper article there. You recognise it at sight as being identical, to a log, with the residence depicted as the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln, and introduced into the front pages of American history school-books. It is still built in outlying parts of the States, maybe as an incentive to the buds of the backwoods in starting on the first lap of their career "from log cabin to White House."

Beneath the unkind surface of the Blue Ridge region are many valuable minerals, evidenced by the frequency of

iron gossan, sulphate of copper signs, the outcropping of "fool's gold" or pyrites, the scales of mica, and the traces of more precious metals. Many of the lodes are probably too deep and too pockety ever to be worked successfully. Some, on the other hand, likely want only exploiting to transform them into paying mines. The crofter is aware that the land he owns is a wedge of the earth clear down to its centre, and that all its cubic contents are his, but as to any ideas on minerals and mines, his head is as empty as a last year's bird's-nest. At rare intervals somebody with a slight discernment of mining possibilities drifts into the country and takes an option, which he gets for the asking, on the more promising spots; and under the influence of his "hot-air" prospective, the simple-minded owner sees visions. But there matters rest. Nothing ever comes out of it. In only one corner of the Ridge has the sound of the railway-whistle yet been heard. There is altogether too little now in sight for the promise of traffic returns to induce capital to undertake the engineering difficulties of track-laying. Farm-products are nil, timber is soon exhausted, and scenery and fresh air are too thin for freight, so unless mining develops, the chances are that the gait of progress of the Blue Ridge will be, like the health of the inhabitants, "jest only moderate," and the cat-bird and the whip-poor-will continue yet awhile to monopolise the echoes of their laurel-clad ravines.

TRAQUAIR'S STALK.

BY "LINESMAN."

LORD DONALD TRAQUAIR was bored; which was the more extraordinary not only because it was the first time in his life he had ever been so, but he was engaged on exactly that to which he had always looked forward as the apogee of human excitement, namely, active service. When war had been declared, and he, the youngest son of the Duke of Banff, had been permitted to enrol all his father's keepers, gillies, stalkers, pony-men, trappers, —in short, the whole "permanent staff" of a vast shooting-estate—into a corps of Scouts and take them to the front, life had seemed to hold no more for him. To lead troops into action had been the dream of his existence, long before he, the best shot, the best rider, walker, and swimmer for miles around Traquair Towers, had nevertheless failed to gain even the qualifying marks for entrance into Sandhurst and a commission. That had been a bitter blow; but he was later actually thankful he had not passed, for instead of a subaltern's star, his shoulders carried a crown of a ("temporary") Major; and instead of toiling behind in the dust of a troop of horse or a company of foot, behold him riding at the head of as stout a band of clansmen as ever sallied from the glens of Traquair. Here were men indeed, his own men, many of his own name, all of his acquaintance and friendship,—men who had taught him all he knew. He had only to look over his shoulder as they marched down to the troop-ship—and he did it once every twenty paces—to catch sight of Sandy McKellar, who had dodged the muzzles of his first breechloader; of Rob Farquhar, who had shown him how to "pick up" the pale shadow of a stag on the hillside, and where to steady the sights on the russet blur of its shoulder at two hundred yards range. There was Andy Lamont, *hors concours* in salmon-fly tying,—he who had spent long hours beneath the steep bluffs of the river-bank imparting to young Traquair the mysteries of the Spey cast, and especially of a patent improvement thereto which fired out the fly three yards beyond the range of any known practitioner; he who, when at length beaten at his own specialty by his young master, had smacked the youngster on the back with as much heartiness as he had shaken the small nobleman by the shoulders on seeing a "fush" clumsily gaffed in the shoulder, instead of being deftly clipped in the narrow of the tail, for haulage up a shelving beach. There was Anderson, the trapper, with eyes always downward, and boot-toe so inured to turning over whatever lay loose upon

the ground, that even the stones of the Southampton street were nudged aside as he slithered towards the dock. There, too, though he should not have been, was old Andrew McStegall, erst-while head-stalker of the whole forest, but lately retired on a pension,—a fact which only did not break his heart because it freed him to shadow his young master in all and every of his pursuits, instead of in only one as heretofore. A fierce, grizzled old man McStegall, pitiless as his own long knife, incarnadined body and soul with the gralloch of innumerable stags. He it was whose agonised "Well! well! well!" uttered over the awful struggles of a "haunched" ten-pointer, had deluded a Traquair guest into admiring the old man's tender-heartedness, until it became apparent that the stalker's grief was not for the agony of the bungled victim, but for the spoiling of his "meat." They were all there—one hundred and seventy-five of them,—and a mighty strange posse they seemed to the crowd who lined the streets to bid the troops farewell.

In the first place, they were an absolutely silent party, in curious contrast with the battalions of cackling Cockneys and roaring Yorkshiremen who had preceded them. Highland foresters, who never exchange a word where a gesture or a grunt will suffice, exchange nothing at all when the occasion demands nothing,—to most of these there seemed actually something unseemly in all this pother on the walk out to a day's sport, which should be the quietest of all earthly proceedings. Next, they were all so different in bearing. The mould which compresses the regular soldier into the stiff, sharp entity he is, had never enclosed those rolling shoulders and swinging loins; and the neat Pimlico khaki jackets gave up all attempt at standardisation when they found themselves thrown open at the neck and rolled up at the wrists. The rifles were easier in mind; they felt themselves at once in the hands of masters, and abated not a jot of their Mark VI. pride because some lay muzzle downward on mighty shoulders, some like mere guns under the armpits, some thrown across the hollow of the elbow,—not one in any regular military position, but not one that was not clean as a cat, from rifle "land" to extractor screw. Closer inspection would have revealed other little idiosyncrasies in Lord Donald's following, such as networks of little cris-crosses graven in the backs of brown necks, caused by eternally looking uphill. All these eyes, too, small and colourless for the most part, were continually looking at *something*, not, as is customary with the Southern optic, at nothing at all when nothing interesting offers. If a gull swooped overhead at the dock-gate, not a man but noticed and noted it. Even in the confusion, a hardly audible shot from a fowler on a distant foreshore turned every head in that direction, as if they had been pulled by one string; and pro-

bably the Highlanders were the only individuals in that vast crowd who noticed one curlew lag behind and finally drop from the flock which had risen at the shot; and every jack-man of them, and not another soul in Southampton, could have crossed the intervening mile and picked it from the clump of sea-poppies into which it had fallen.

Well, these were the men, and over there was the war, a big and busy war, and when fate and the troopship finally brought the two together, Traquair, who loved both, as has been said, made certain that he was about to quaff life from a beaker. His spirits had risen still higher when he first beheld the theatre of the campaign. Rolling hills, grass-grown from base to summit, bossed with crags on the higher contours, belted with woodland on the lower, rushing rivers pouring over their feet, tinkling burns and cascades searing with silver lines their mighty sides, — why, it was Perthshire over again; and as he looked at the humming battalion of little Londoners tripping it into bivouac in front, and then at his own glum, striding handful, he felt as sorry for the former's Colonel as he had felt for certain Traquair guests when they had brought No. 8 shot or twenty-bore guns for grouse driven at fifty miles an hour, fifty yards high. At any rate, he had brought the right weapon; it would be his fault if he did not use it aright.

Nevertheless, behold him, six months later, weary of the whole affair, though in the very thick of it. The fact was that this was a real war, which is always nine-tenths dulness to one of delirium, and so far there had been nothing but the major ingredient. Traquair was not naturally a very brilliant young fellow, and his lack of military training prevented him from perceiving anything but "rot" in a situation which would have proved interesting enough to an educated officer. On the long ridges in front of the force of which his Scouts formed part, lay the outposts of the hostile advance-guard. They were motionless, because they had come far enough, and unenterprising, because, first, it is not the duty of outposts to coruscate, and secondly, because they very properly desired to watch without being watched. What they saw was a weak force apparently come oversea for the sole purpose of camping before their field-glasses. What they did not see, and, being as stupid as Traquair, did not guess, was a large army secretly concentrating behind three or four watersheds nearly a hundred miles away, in preparation for a wide turning movement which would tumble them back by forced marches, dropping transport as rapidly as a punctured balloonist drops his sandbags to postpone the uprising earth. The result was an idle wait of half a year's duration, about as exhilarating to both sides, after the *élan* of mobilisation, as the descent, as by law enacted, of the fireproof cur-

tain at the crisis of a thrilling drama,—of all earthly happenings the most chilling to the spirits. For six months, therefore, Traquair and his Scouts had done nothing but "go on picquet," over the same little stretch of front, in face of the same rock-browed bluff two miles up and away, with its little group of hostile look-outs on top. Like all raw troops, the opposing picquets had begun by shooting at each other. In fact, the ignorance of both sides had nearly made life bearable in the early days, when reconnoitring patrols stirred about reconnoitring what could plainly be discovered without reconnoitring, or was not worth discovering, to the great disturbance of innocent sleepers or lunchers in the camps behind the outposts. Once, indeed, the too daring advance of an unusually strong patrol had enabled Traquair not only to deliver his notion of a counter-attack, but to push it so nearly home that, golden moment! his men had actually burst forth into that yell which he had always prayed to hear in action, the slogan of the Traquairs. But even this had fallen flat. The enemy having ascertained what he wished, namely, Traquair's strength and position, had scarcely retired when a staff officer cantered up with a double-barrelled query from the General, to wit—(*a*) What the deuce did Traquair mean by breaking the outpost line and using it for offensive purposes? (*b*) What the h—ll did he mean by making so much noise about it? Thereafter, therefore, stagnation again, week upon week, month after month, during which the outposts of both sides, as outposts will, became slack; patrols dwindled, then ceased, picquets were replaced by mere groups, groups by single sentries, and over their "Bridge" or Bibles both sides heartily prayed that the war might either be ended or begun. They were earning the invisible bar for "Waiting," which every old soldier nevertheless sees, and knows is not the least hardly gained, amongst the little silver-runged ladder which runs up the medal ribbon.

One practice, almost the last of his early keennesses, Traquair had never discontinued, and that was the habit of conducting in person the relief to the night picquet, which left camp half-an-hour before dawn. It was at least a reason for getting up, he said, and about the only one in the day. The picquet-post lay about a mile distant, just below the crest of a long slope, which rose gently all the way from camp. It looked across a broad shallow valley, seamed with small, for the most part dry, watercourses, to a high ridge some two miles away on the other side, along the crest of which the enemy had his look-outs, or rather look-out, for in the section allotted to the Scouts the hostile line of observation had long since shrunk to a single sentry. This individual was in fact sufficient, for he was posted

on the summit of a huge crag which, projecting from the face of the ridge, commanded not only all the ground in front, but also all up and down the valley. Its occupant, indeed, overlooking the Scouts' picquet by many hundreds of feet, could look right into their camp behind, and he was as weary of the sight of that parallelogram of snowy triangles as the inhabitants of the latter were of the squat black dot of his person against the distant skyline. Time was when his "support" had lain close at hand; but the little breath of rising smoke which had signalled their various meals no longer rose behind the crag. The support now remained in camp by day, secure in the knowledge that their sentry could warn them of any attack at least an hour before it could come to terms, and they were only a mile back, five minutes' ride if need be.

One still autumn morning Traquair, accompanied as usual by Andrew McStegall, led the day picquet out of camp in the chilly twilight as he had done *ad nauseam*. There was the usual little silent wait by the night-post,—neither men who have been up all night nor those who have just got up are chatful, even if they be not Scotsmen. Then the electric blue slit of dawn opened up the valley, the opposite ridge-line began to show like a jagged pen-stroke against the paling sky, and the mist in the depths shuddered and stirred at the chilly kiss of the first breeze of the morning. "Take them back, McKerrow," said Traquair; and the men of the night picquet, ugly with cold, grotesque in woollen caps and other garments of the darkness, stumbled off for camp. The fresh sentry was posted, the new picquet piled arms and prepared for another day of unutterable dulness. All this was as it had happened just one hundred and eighty times before, with one trifling exception. Lord Donald, instead of following the retiring picquet, remained gazing moodily across the lightening valley. For five minutes he stood motionless, old McStegall crouching close behind. Then the former turned. "Andrew," he said, "what day is this?" "'Tis the eighteenth of September — ay, the eighteenth." A pause. "But ye'll no' be the firrst in of the Castle folk wi' a beast from the hill the day, I'm thinkin', as ye've done for a dozen year past." Ever since Lord Donald's twelfth year it had been the old man's pride that the first stag of the season should fall to his young master's rifle. There was a short silence, broken only by a faint click-click as McStegall, his eyes bent downward, fiddled dejectedly with his rifle-bolt. Then Traquair spoke again. "Will I not, Andrew? Will I not? By the Urisks,[1] but I will!" The curious thickness in his voice, no less than the extraordinary nature of his remark,

[1] The goblins of ancient Caledonia.

drew McSteggall's eyes upward in amazement. For a moment his wonder deepened as he beheld Traquair still glowering fixedly across the valley, staring across and upward with a look which the old stalker had never seen before on the refined features. Mechanically he followed the direction of that fixed stare; and then suddenly his face too took on the same expression. Up went the outsides, down into two rough furrows dipped the insides of his shaggy eyebrows; his lip curled back from his yellow teeth with the sneer of an angry dog. He had understood. Up there, against the lemon sky, two miles away, protruded the little black, stick-like silhouette of the enemy's solitary sentry. The two men looked at one another. There was no need for explanations. Both with the instinct of long habit looked at their watches.[1] It was five o'clock. "They'll have to be early at Traquair to beat us," grinned the younger man; "come on, Andrew!" and he started impetuously down the slope. "Nay, nay," protested the latter, detaining him by the arm, "Lord Donal', ye've aye perrmitted me to worrk out the firrst stalk o' the year meself, —ye'll no' be hinderin' me the noo, will ye? Forbye, ye're just aboot beginnin' wi' a big mistake. Think ye yon beast has no' spied us? Ay, he has that. Back to the picquet wi' us [the picquet, sheltering close behind the crest, was not actually visible to the distant look-out], an' he'll judge we're nobbut a pair o' the lads going back to breakfast. Nay, nay!" again, as Traquair started to obey, "after, *after* we ha'e examined the groond. Gi'e me yer bit glass." Lord Donald complied, and old McStegall, resting his elbows on his knees as he sat, began that prolonged "examination o' the groond" which has exasperated so many eager young stalkers until they learn to bless the patient eye and wonderful memory which marks across apparently naked abattis a covered way of shallow depressions, of tiny stream-beds, of tussocks of grass, of knolls indistinguishable from flatness by eyes unaccustomed to survey miles by inches from miles away. Ten minutes of tense but deliberate study, during which one or two impatient questions from Traquair remained unanswered, were terminated by a grunt and a swift shutting-up of the field-glass. "There'll be a muckle belly-work," growled McStegall to himself as he rose. "Now, Lord Donal', remember 'tis my stalk; come awa'!" The pair walked openly over the crest-line back to the concealed picquet, the men of which blinked uninterestedly at them as they came and passed. Even young McNickall, the

[1] Sportsmen have a habit of noting the time of their first spying of the stag which they intend to approach, dating the duration of the stalk from that moment.

sentry, had not his eyes open wide enough to perceive anything unusual in the demeanour of the officer and his henchman. "Goin' back to breakfast, likely, or to shoot a stone-buck," he mused, and as they passed out of sight around a rock he resumed his official stare at Nothing.

Once clear of the picquet, McStegall and his companion, the former leading, found themselves about to emerge from the cover which hid them from their quarry. "Doon wi' us noo, for twa hundred yards, until we win the bit burn!" whispered old Andrew, as if the far-off sentry could hear them. So they crawled, stomachs flat to the ground, worming a scratchy uncomfortable way through bristling grass. Traquair had noted no "bit burn," but soon, following McStegall's shiny nailed boot soles, he felt his head drooping and all his pockets apparently turning inside out as they steeply turned down hill, until an almost perpendicular dive landed them into a dusty trench of variable depth which descended fairly straight to the valley bottom. The ditch here was shoulder high, and McStegall, bareheaded, slowly raising his eyes, and no more, to the level of the brink, took a prolonged stare at the enemy through the glasses. "A' richt," he muttered; "he's no' spied us, though we were farr too hasty. Cannily, noo, doon the burn!" Down the ditch they moved, now bending, now scuttling on all fours, now upright, straightening aching backs and palsied leg joints, now crawling again like wounded crocodiles, according as the protecting bank raised or lowered or altogether ceased. Fortunately the course of the bed ran somewhat diagonally to the general fall of the ground, so that the sentry could never see entirely into it. Arrived at the bottom, they found themselves confronted at its junction with the main stream by a wide pool, almost the only one remaining after a season of drought. It was impossible to avoid it, for a detour on either side would lead over absolutely open beaches of pebble. Traquair gave a low whistle of despair. McStegall said nothing, but putting his watch between his teeth, signed to his companion to do the same. Then he led on straight into the water. This was of the convenient depth of some five feet, so that by bending their knees, throwing back their heads, the stalkers could keep their faces above and flush with the surface, parallel with which, and just clear of it, McStegall contrived to uplift the rifle. Thirty yards or so of icy wading followed, during which the upturned faces of the hunters seemed to be looking straight into that of the quarry, now some 800 feet almost perpendicularly above them on his rocky outcrop. Should he, for lack of anything better to do, turn his glasses upon the river, they must be discovered, for slowly, almost imperceptibly as they moved, the two pale visages were strange and apparent enough as they traversed the

glassy pool like jelly-fish floating across a tank. The behaviour of the two men as they sidled over was typical. Whilst Traquair glared upward at his intended victim with a stare of mingled apprehension and anticipation, McStegall, unwilling to lose the most atomic aid to concealment, closed his eyes altogether, lest their brightness should betray him. Arrived at the other side, McStegall, drying the dripping glass, poked it between the fronds of fern growing on the edge of the four-foot bank, and long and anxiously scrutinised the sentry. But the sentry was not interested in the river; he was not, in fact, interested in anything. Once, indeed, he did raise a perfunctory field-glass against the distant camp, an act which nearly cost the old Scotsman a chuckle, which was, however, quickly changed to a wink downward at his companion prone at his side.

Now for a time the task became easier. A short crawl amongst the ropy bracken stems quickly brought the pair so directly beneath their eyried quarry, that they became invisible to him. Taking infinite care to avoid stones and sticks, the kicking of either of which would have sounded like a fog-signal in the still air, they could now walk erect up the grassy bouldered slope which led to the base of the crag. Soon they were beneath its tower-like wall, and only the last stage of the attack lay before them. It presented a pretty problem. Two corries, gullies as steeply slanting and as bare as the mud-shoots of a dredger, ran heavenward, leading up around either side of the topmost crag. Either was equally serviceable for approach, and equally risky, for both opened into the view of the sentry at some 300 yards below his perch. Traquair looked inquiringly at McStegall. The latter, wetting a forefinger, held it aloft. Lord Donald, though he knew the danger, could not repress a low laugh. "Come! you old fool," he whispered; "no need to bother about the wind with this beast!" "Nay, but we'll use him like a gentleman, though he be none," growled Andrew in reply; "'tis the eastern airt, —the western corrie for us! Come awa' noo! But tak' the rifle—ye'll no' be lang for the shot." Traquair took the weapon, and smiled again as he examined it. It was a ·303 Lee-Metford, with magazine, charger-guides, and all complete, but a very different affair from the regulation pattern issued to the Scouts on mobilisation. Short in the barrel, which was unencumbered with any wood-casing, its magazine holding five instead of ten cartridges, with a V backsight as sharp as a hatchet stroke, and a bead foresight as cleanly rounded as a tiny billiard-ball, the tool weighed no more than seven pounds, and came to the shoulder as patly as a gun. "Ay," muttered McStegall, "syne they'd no' let me sarve as a Scout" (he had been refused on account of age), "d'ye think I was going to carry aboot their damt blunderbuss?" Traquair, squatting on his

haunches, sighted the weapon for a moment on a distant stump. "Is it in good order, Andrew?" he whispered. The old man's only reply was a scowl, and Traquair bit his lip. "Sorry, Andrew, sorry, old man. Come on now!"

Cautiously they crept around the base of the crag, and wormed into the mouth of the left-hand corrie, then, bent double, step by step up its roof-like slope, keeping close beneath its wall. Quarter of an hour passed whilst they made good some two hundred yards. Then McStegall signalled a halt. "We can see him from here," he breathed. Motioning Traquair to lie down, he put the glass to his eyes, and by eighths of an inch at a time raised his face above the parapet. So close were they now, that through the glasses the unconscious sentry seemed to be alongside, and even the hardened old stalker could not forbear a far longer spy than he had ever allowed himself before so near "the shot." On the topmost rock before him sat a vast, bearded old man, his rifle between his knees. On his grizzled head rested a huge terai hat, from which stuck out two long, straight feathers, like those from a pheasant's tail. McStegall, now sufficiently excited to be instinctively possessed by confused thoughts of "heads," particularly noted these feathers, and a grin creased his parchment visage as he subsided as noiselessly as the mercury in a thermometer down to his companion. "He's nobbut a 'switch,'"[1] he whispered into Lord Donald's ear, "but a grreat, heavy-bodied beast withal, eighteen stone 'clean' at least!" Traquair gripped the rifle, but McStegall held up a prohibiting finger, then pointed farther up the corrie. He wished to gain another hundred yards if possible. But no sooner had they begun to crawl than something happened which made their hearts tap the ground beneath them like the sticks of a drum. A small bustard, fluttering up under the leader's very nose, bustled off noisily with loud bubbling cries which awoke the echoes on the mountain. "Spotted for certain!" croaked Traquair. "Damn the grouse!" But McStegall pressed him to the ground with a hand of lead and iron. For ten agonising minutes they lay motionless as corpses. A sharp stone drove into Andrew's forearm, but like a very stone he bore the agony, feeling the blood break out when the skin broke. Traquair's face lay upon the stalker's iron-bound heel, and a great bruise began to throb and burn at his cheek-bone. They heard the sentry start to his feet, and listened in agony lest footsteps should follow. They heard the clank of his rifle-bolt as he wrenched a round from the magazine into the chamber. Finally, after a long wait, they heard the sound they most desired, the heavy swag as, reassured, he dropped himself down again on

[1] The term applied by stalkers to a stag whose antlers are destitute of branches, or "points."

the sack-covered rock. Then forward they crawled, until McStegall turned an ashen face under his armpit, and Lord Donald knew that the moment had come. McStegall held up three fingers. The young man pushed the sliding-sight to 300 yards with shaking hand, slowly rose to his knees, and peered through the shaggy eyebrow of grass which fringed the low edge of the corrie wall. It at once appeared that in making this last advance McStegall had committed the only mistake of his stalk. Instead of the whole body of the quarry being now visible, a slight intervening rise now hid from view all but his head and chest, a small enough mark on a Royal stag, much less on that mannikin called man. But there was no help for it. Resting the rifle on the bank, Traquair lowered his cheek to the butt and looked along the sights. Twice his misty eyes closed, and twice his head sank down amongst the grass alongside the polished brown walnut. This was a very different thing to deer-stalking, and even in that his heart had failed him often enough at the beauty and innocence he was about to turn to mere meat.

"I can't do it, Andrew," he groaned aloud, and at his words the huge figure on the plinth started and made as if to rise. With an oath McStegall snatched the rifle, one quick jerk to his shoulder, an infinitesimal pause, and the ·303 spoke. Coughing like a sick bull, the unhappy sentry leaped into the air and fell with a crash. In an instant McStegall was upon him, his gralloching knife between his teeth, his empty hands thrust out to wrestle with the victim if necessary. But the man was evidently dying; there was a burnt and bloody stain on his chest, and between his shoulders a terrible wound in which a fist might have been thrust. He breathed in great sodden sobs, like the squelching of a bath-sponge, and at every breath thick blood surged from his mouth and down his grizzled beard. Soon both breathing and bloodshed slackened and ceased together, and the pair of hunters for the first time looked at each other across his body. Lord Donald was livid; tears ran down his cheeks, and he hid his face in his hands. But McStegall was the picture of brutal triumph. This was the stalk of his life. He tore his watch from his pocket. "Six-thirty, my lord," he shouted. "He'll be a sair airly riser at Traquair wha gets ane from the hill before us twa!" Jestingly he brandished his knife. "Shall I 'clean' him noo, Lord Donal?" he asked. But Traquair, stricken with remorse for the whole affair, was in no mood for joking. "Be silent, you brute!" he said in a low, fierce voice; "be silent, and obey orders!" In a moment the old man drooped like one of his own thrashed deerhounds. "Now, then, let's staunch that beastly hole, and turn him over," said Traquair. A rolled handkerchief, wetted from the victim's own water-bottle, quickly filled the wound, and McStegall, passing his belt around it,

turned the body in order to make the binding fast on the other side. As he did so, the hat fell from the ghastly face. A loud shriek from McStegall stopped the beating of Traquair's heart, and even caused the sufferer's eyes to open slowly. "What is it, Andrew?" "Why," gasped the stalker, "why, if it isna' auld Andy McPherson wha flitted fra' the glen ane nicht fifteen year back, and has no' bin heerd of syne! Andy! D'ye mind me, Andrew McStegall fra' Knochkily Cottage, nigh the march? Andy!" "Never mind now," interposed the amazed Traquair, "let's get him away." The belt was quickly tightened over both wounds, and Lord Donald and Traquair were about to attempt to lift the huge bulk, when the man, who was plainly not so grievously hurt as it seemed, pointed backward towards a dip in the rock behind his post. McStegall looked at him suspiciously for a moment, then cautiously moved in the direction indicated, and there, surely enough, stood the sentry's horse, hobbled, but saddled and bridled. McStegall led the animal back, and together the pair lifted the wounded man into the saddle. His lips moved, and Traquair, putting his ear to them, made out the words, whispered in broadest Scotch, "Gleg [quick] noo! ma' relief will be here in aboot a quatter of an 'oor!" The active little horse, led on either side, scrambled quickly down the slope. Just as the party reached the river at the bottom, a shout rang out from the crag behind, followed by a shot, then another, then a little flight of them. The relief had arrived, and as the bullets whanged and buzzed far above, the drawn features of the poor horseman actually distorted further into a grin. He swayed down towards Traquair, "Ye'll hae to learn 'em, m' lord!" he whispered hoarsely. "Nay, 'twas not I who shot you," panted back Lord Donald, "but I am going to set you up again." Soon they were in safety, and a little later in camp, where the wounded man was comfortably installed in the Field Hospital.

Nothing of all this had got abroad. Traquair himself was not sufficiently proud of the incident to bruit it about, and as for McStegall, he had never volunteered a story in his life, and was not going to break the rule now. It might have remained long the private property of his master and himself, but for that old extractor of secrets, a taunt. In the evening all the older hands of the Scouts, McStegall amongst them, being gathered as usual around their special camp-fire, it occurred to Sandy McKellar to make merry at his crusty old crony's expense. "Well, well, Andrew," he called, "'tis the eighteenth of September richt an' sure, but ye can no' lead us in the stag-chantie as ye've done the last thirty year" (it had been for centuries the custom at Traquair Towers to celebrate the downfall of the first stag of the year by a Gaelic song groaned by all hands over its body laid out on the lawn);

"ye hae ma condolences, auld Andrew!" "Keep 'em, keep 'em, Andy," growled McStegall in reply; "dinna break the rule o' ye life and gie awa' something for naething! Dinna fash ye puir old head; I hae ma beastie fra' the hill a' richt,—ay, I hae ma beastie, and ye'll hae ye chantie!" His words aroused a chorus of amazement amongst his hearers. What! a beast? Was Andrew also, for the first time in his long career, making a joke? Was he mad, or, less likely, fou? "A beast?" they shouted; "an' where, in the name o' John Barleycorn, does he lie?" "In the thirrd tent on the richt adoon the thirrd field-hospital," grunted the old fellow; "go an' spy, if ye dinna believe!" And they went and looked.

McPherson's hurt proved comparatively trifling after all. The bullet had punctured the lung, and the actual closeness of the range had rushed the lead so cleanly through, that it had begun to heal almost at once by first intention. Part of his story Lord Donald heard at once from McStegall. The man, a tenant of the Duke, and an underkeeper on the forest, had suddenly vanished from the district, no one knew exactly why, when Traquair was a small boy at school. The rest was told by McPherson himself during his rapid convalescence. It appeared that the Duke, then young and foolish enough to go stalking alone, when out one day on the hill early in October, had caught his big underkeeper red-handed in the very act of slaying a hind with calf a' foot, the unmentionable crime in the forest. An angry altercation had led to actual blows. "Ay, m' lord," narrated McPherson, "I fought ye father, just on the knobbie of Ben Hinish, where the ptarmigan nest; ye mind, Andrew?" turning to McStegall, who was present; "but 'twas none of my seekin'—the fightin' I mean —for he challenged and belled at me like a ruttin' stag, and there was no that much in the endin' o' it, either; he gie me twa stane, but he gie me also the shairpest and quickest left I aye saw on a mon. An' when 'twas over, and us twa lay pantin' amongst the whins, his Grace he said to me, 'A weel, Andy,' he said, 'ye'll jest hae the choice o' stannin' the law or quittin' the forest this varra day; which do ye tak?' 'Twas no that hard to make choice; it meant quittin' the glen any road, for which o' the lads wad speak with one wha had slain a hind? So I told his Grace, and he said, 'A' believe ye're richt, Andy, an' here's a twenty-pound note to pay yer way to Hell with.' And so a' flitted, Lord Donal', and sailed out here steerage, and became a citizen of this fusionless docken o' a clan, until the war came, and by then I had been so lang a darn't furriner that I didna' sae much mind servin', even had I the free will, which I hadna'. An' noo, m' lord, ye'll tak' me back to Traquair?—I thank ye, I thank ye!"

TALES OF THE MERMAID TAVERN.

BY ALFRED NOYES.

VII. *FLOS MERCATORUM.*

PART III.

"And by that light," quoth Clopton, "did he keep
His promise. He was rich; but in his will
He wrote those words which should be blazed with gold
In London's *Liber Albus*:—

The desire
And busy intention of a man, devout
And wise, should be to fore-cast and secure
The state and end of this short life with deeds
Of mercy and pity, especially to provide
For those whom poverty insulteth; those
To whom the power of labouring for the needs
Of life, is interdicted.

He became
The Father of the City. Felons died
Of fever in old Newgate. He rebuilt
The prison. London sickened from the lack
Of water, and he made fresh fountains flow.
He heard the cry of suffering and disease,
And built the stately hospital that still
Shines like an angel's lanthorn through the night,
The stately halls of St Bartholomew.
He saw men wrapt in ignorance, and he raised
Schools, colleges, and libraries. He heard
The cry of the old and weary, and he built
Houses of refuge.
Even so he kept
His prentice vows of Duty, Industry,
Obedience, words contemned of every fool
Who shrinks from law; yet were those ancient vows
The adamantine pillars of the State.
Let all who play their Samson be well warned
That Samsons perish, too!
His monument
Is London!"
"Ay," quoth Dekker, "and he deserves
Well of the Mermaid Inn for one good law,
Rightly enforced. He pilloried that rogue

Will Horold, who in Whittington's third year
Of office, as Lord Mayor, placed certain gums
And spices in great casks, and filled them up
With feeble Spanish wine, to have the taste
And smell of Romeney,—Malmsey!"
"Ay, sound wine,
Indeed," replied the Clerk, "concerns the State,
That solemn structure touched with light from heaven,
Which he, our merchant, helped to build on earth.
And, while he laboured for it, all things else
Were added unto him, until the bells
More than fulfilled their prophecy.
One great eve,
Fair Alice, leaning from her casement, saw
Another Watch, and mightier than the first,
Billowing past the newly painted doors
Of Whittington Palace—so men called his house
In Hart Street, fifteen yards from old Mark Lane,—
A thousand burganets and halberdiers,
A thousand archers in their white silk coats,
A thousand mounted men in ringing mail,
A thousand sworded henchmen; then, his Guild,
Advancing, on their splendid bannerols
The Virgin, glorious in gold; and then,
Flos Mercatorum, on his great stirring steed
Whittington! On that night he made a feast
For London and the King. His feasting hall
Gleamed like the magic cave that Prester John
Wrought out of one huge opal. East and West
Lavished their wealth on that great Citizen
Who, when the King from Agincourt returned
Victorious, but with empty coffers, lent
Three times the ransom of an Emperor
To fill them—on the royal bond, and said
When the King questioned him of how and whence,
'I am the steward of your City, sire!
There is a sea, and who shall drain it dry?'
Over the roasted swans and peacock pies,
The minstrels in the great black gallery tuned
All hearts to mirth, until it seemed their cups
Were brimmed with dawn and sunset, and they drank
The wine of gods. Lord of a hundred ships,
Under the feet of England, Whittington flung
The purple of the seas. And when the Queen,
Catharine, wondered at the costly woods
That burned upon his hearth, the Marchaunt rose,
He drew the great sealed parchments from his breast,
The bonds the King had given him on his loans,
Loans that might drain the Mediterranean dry.
'They call us hucksters, madam, we that love
Our City,' and, into the red-hot heart of the fire,
He tossed the bonds of sixty thousand pounds.
'The fire burns low,' said Richard Whittington.

Then, overhead, the minstrels plucked their strings;
And, o'er the clash of wine-cups, rose a song
That made the old timbers of their feasting-hall
Shake, as a galleon shakes in a gale of wind,
When she rolls glorying through the Ocean-sea:—

Marchaunt Adventurers, O what shall it profit you
Thus to seek your kingdom in the dream-destroying sun?
Ask us why the hawthorn brightens on the sky-line:
Even so our sails break out when Spring is well begun!
Flos Mercatorum! Blossom wide, ye sails of England,
Hasten ye the kingdom, now the bitter days are done!
Ay, for we be members, one of another,
Each for all, and all for each, quoth Richard Whittington!

Chorus:— Marchaunt Adventurers,
Marchaunt Adventurers,
Marchaunt Adventurers, the Spring is well begun!
Break, break out on every sea, O, fair white sails of England!
'Each for all, and all for each,' quoth Richard Whittington.

Marchaunt Adventurers, O what 'ull ye bring home again?
Hearts of British oak and the lordship of the sea!
Whom will ye traffic with? The King of the sunset!—
What shall be your pilot, then?—A wind from Galilee!
—Nay, but ye be marchaunts, will ye come back empty-handed?—
Ay, we be marchaunts, though our gain we ne'er shall see!
Cast we now our bread upon the waste wild waters;
After many days it shall return with usury.

Chorus:— Marchaunt Adventurers,
Marchaunt Adventurers,
What shall be your profit in the mighty days to be?
Englande! Englande! Englande! Englande!
Glory everlasting and the lordship of the sea.

What need to tell you, sirs, how Whittington
Remembered? Night and morning, as he knelt
In those old days, O, like two children still,
Whittington and his Alice bowed their heads
Together, praying, at their bedside.
Fools
Deride such prayers; but, from such simple hearts,
O never doubt it, though the whole world doubt
The God that made it, came the steadfast strength
Of England, all that once was her strong soul,
The soul that laughed and shook away defeat
As her strong cliffs hurl back the streaming seas.

But, if indeed she doubt, if she forget
Utterly, though with fleet on fleet she load
The groaning deep, for lack of that pure faith
England shall perish utterly.
Whittington
Remembered. In his old age he returned
And kneeled, with Alice, at his father's grave
In little Pauntley church.
There, to his Arms,
The Gules and Azure, and the Lion's Head
So proudly blazoned on the painted panes;
(O, sirs, the simple wistfulness of it
Might move hard hearts to laughter, but I think
Tears tremble through it, for the Mermaid Inn)
He added his new crest, the hard-won sign
And lowly prize of his own industry,
The Honey-bee. And, far away, the bells
Peal softly from the pure white City of God:—

So did he remember, so did he remember,
How the might that makes a man is greater than his own!
There, like little children, O their grey heads bowed together,
Simply, as he prayed of old, a little lad alone.

So did he remember, as he looked upon his shield again,
How he went, unshielded, but with all the world to win,
Round by Sussex violets, a bare-foot boy to London,
Flos Mercatorum, ay, but England's Benjamin.

Kneeling by his father's grave in little Pauntley chancel,
By the chivalry of God, until his day was done,
So did he remember, so did he remember,
Every bare-foot boy on earth is but a younger son.

With folded hands he waits the Judgment, now!
Slowly the great bell tolls his epitaph:—

Ut fragrans nardus
Fama fuit iste Ricardus.

Slowly the great bell tolls across the world
For him who waits the reckoning, his accompt
Secure, his conscience clear, his ledger spread
A *Liber Albus*, to the gaze of God.

Flos Mercatorum,
Fundator presbyterorum, . . .

Slowly the great bell tolls for him who asks
No more of men, but that they may sometimes
Pray for the souls of Richard Whittington,
Alice, his wife, and (as themselves of old
Had prayed) the father and mother of each of them.
Slowly the great notes fall and float away:—

Omnibus exemplum
Barathrum vincendo morosum
Condidit hoc templum . . .
Pauperibus pater . . .
Finiit ipse dies
Sis sibi Christe quies. Amen."

HOCKEN AND HUNKEN.

A TALE OF TROY.

BY "Q."

CHAPTER XXIV.—FANCY BRINGS NEWS.

"WHICH," Mrs Bowldler reported to Fancy, who had left her master's sickbed to pay a fleeting visit to Palmerston's, "the treatment was drastic for a growin' child. First of all Mrs Bosenna, that never had a child of her own, sent down to the cabin for the mustard that had been left over from the Sailin' Committee's sangwidges, and mixed up a drink with it and a little cold water. Which the results was *nil;* that is to say, pecuniarily speakin'. Then somebody fetched along Mr Clogg the vet. from Tregarrick, that had come over for the day to judge the horses, and *he* said as plain salt-and-water was worth all the mustard in the world, so they made the poor boy swallow the best part of a pint, and he brought up eighteenpence."

"Saints alive! But I thought you told me——"

"So I did: two solid golden sufferins. And *that*," said Mrs Bowldler, "was for some time the most astonishin' part of the business. Two solid golden sufferins: and low!—as the sayin' is—low and behold, eighteenpence in small silver!"

"Little enough too, for a miracle!" mused Fancy.

"It encouraged 'em to go on. Captain Hocken—he's a humane gentleman, too, and never graspin'—no, never in his life!—but I suppose he'd begun to get interested,—Captain Hocken ups and suggests as they were wastin' time, mixin' table-salt and water when there was the wide ocean itself overside, to be had for the dippin'. So they tried sea-water."

"My poor Pammy!"

"Don't you start a-pityin' me," gasped a voice, faint but defiant, from the bed. "If I die, I die. But I got the account to balance."

"I disremember what sum—er—resulted that time," confessed Mrs Bowldler; "my memory not bein' what it was."

"Ninepence; an' two threepennies with the soap—total, two-and-nine, which was correct. If I die, I die," moaned Palmerston.

"'Ero!" murmured Fancy, stepping to the bedside and arranging his pillow.

"You take my advice and lie quiet," counselled Mrs Bowldler. "You're not a-goin' to die this time. But there's been a shock to the system, you may make up your mind," she went on, turning to Fancy. "I'd most forgotten about the soap. That was Philp's sug-

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gestion, as I heard. They found a cake of Monkey Brand in the ship's fo'c'sle, and by the time Doctor Higgs arrived with his stomach-pump——"

"They'd sent for *him?* What, for two pounds?"

"Less two-an'-nine, by this —as they thought. But, of course, there was the child's health to be considered. . . . I ought to mention that before Dr Higgs came Captain Hunken remembered how he'd treated a seaman once, that had swallowed carbolic by mistake. He recommended tar: but there wasn't any tar to be found — which seems strange, aboard a ship."

"It was lucky, anyhow."

"There was a plenty of hard pitch about, and one or two reckoned the marine glue in the deck-seams might be a passable substitute. They were diggin' some out with their penknives when Doctor Higgs arrived with his pump."

"And did he use it?"

"He did not. He asked what First Aid they had been applyin', an' when they told him, his language was not to be repeated. 'D'ye think,' said he, 'as I'd finish the child for——' well, he named the balance, whatever 'twas."

"One-seventeen-three," said the voice from the bed.

"That's so. And 'Monkey Brand'? says he. 'Why, you've scoured his little stummick so, you might put it on the chimbly-piece and see your face in it! Fit an' wrap what's left of him in a blanket,' says Doctor Higgs; 'an' take him home an' put him to bed,' says he—which they done so," concluded Mrs Bowldler, "an' if you'll believe it, when I come to put him to bed an' fold his trowsers across the chair, out trickles the two sufferins!"

"You don't say!"

"He's been absent-minded of late. If they'd only turned his pockets out instead of—well, we won't go into details: but the two pounds was there all the time. 'Twas the petty cash he'd swallowed, in the shock at hearin' about Mr Rogers. . . . And how's *he*, by the way?"

"Bad," answered Fancy, "dreadful bad. I don't think he's goin' to die, not just yet-awhile: but he can't speak, and his mind's troubled."

"Reason enough why, if all's truth that they tell of him."

"But it isn't."

"He brought your own father to beggary."

"Well, you may put it that way if you choose. It's the way they all put it that felt for Dad without allowin' their feelin's to take 'em further. Not that he'd any claim to more'n their pity. He speckilated with Mr Rogers, and Mr Rogers did him in the eye, that's all. And I'm very fond of Dad," continued the wise child; "but the longer I live the more I don't see as one man can bring another to beggary unless the other man helps. The point is, Mr Rogers didn' leave him there. . . . We've enough to eat."

"Ho! If *that* contents you ——" Mrs Bowldler shrugged her shoulders.

"Who said it did? We don't ezackly make Gawds of our bellies, Dad and I; but

there's a difference between that and goin' empty. Ask Pammy!" she added, with a twitch and a grin.

"I've heard you say, anyway, that you was afraid Mr Rogers 'd go to the naughty place. A dozen times I've heard you say it."

"Rats! — you never did. What you heard me say was that he'd go to hell, and I was sure of it. . . . And you may call it weak, but I can't bear it," the child broke out with a cry of distress, intertwisting her fingers and wringing them. "It's dreadful—dreadful!—to sit by and watch him lyin' there, with his mind workin' and no power to speak. All the time he's wantin' to say something to me, and—and—Where's Cap'n Hocken?"

"In his parlour. I heard his step in the passage, ten minutes ago, an' the door close."

"I'm goin' down to him, if you'll excuse me," said Fancy, rising from the bedroom chair into which she had dropped in her sudden access of grief.

"Why?"

"I dunno. . . . He's a good man, for one thing. You haven't noticed any difference in him?"

"Since when?" The question obviously took Mrs Bowldler by surprise.

"Since he heard — yesterday——"

"Me bein' single-handed, with Palmerston on his back, so to speak, I hev' not taken particular observation," said Mrs Bowldler. "Last night, as I removed the cloth after supper, he passed the remark that it had been a very tirin' day, that this was sad news about Mr Rogers, but we'd hope for the best, and when I mentioned scrambled eggs for breakfast, he left it to me. Captain Hunken, on the other hand, chose haddock: he did mention—come to think of it, and when I happened to say that a second stroke was mostly fatal—he did go so far as to say that all flesh was grass, and that Palmerston would require feedin' up after what he'd gone through."

"He—Cap'n Hunken—didn' seem worried in mind, either?"

"Nothing to notice. Of course," added Mrs Bowldler, "you understand that our appetites are not what they were: that there has been a distink droppin' off since—you know what. They both eats, in a fashion, but where's the pleasure in pleasin' 'em? Heart-renderin', I call it, when a devilled kidney might be a plain boiled cabbage for all the heed taken, and you knowin' all the while that a woman's at the bottom of it."

Fancy moved to the door. "Well," said she, "I'm sorry for the cause of it: but duty's duty, and I reckon I've news to make 'em sit up."

She went downstairs resolutely and knocked at Cai's parlour-door.

"Come in! . . . Eh, so it's you, missy? No worse news of the invalid, I hope?"

"He isn't goin' to die to-day, nor yet to-morrow, if that's what you mean. May I take a chair?"

"Why, to be sure."

"Thank you." Fancy seated herself. "If you please, Cap'n

Hocken, I got a very funny question to ask."

"Well?"

"You mustn't think I'm inquisitive——"

"Go on."

"If you please, Cap'n Hocken, are you very fond indeed of Mrs Bosenna?"

Cai turned about to the hearth and stooped for the tongs, as if to place a lump of coal on the fire. Then he seemed to realise that, the season being early summer, there was no fire and the tongs and coal-scuttle had been removed. He straightened himself up slowly and faced about again, very red and confused (but the flush may have come from his stooping).

"So we're not inquisitive, aren't we? Well, missy, appearances are deceptive sometimes—that's all I say."

"But I'm not askin' out o' curiosity — really an' truly. And, please, don't turn me out an' warn me to mind my own business; for it *is* my business, in a way. . . . I'll explain it all, later on, if only you'll tell."

"I admire Mrs Bosenna very much indeed," said Cai slowly. "There now,—will that satisfy you?"

Fancy shook her head. "Not quite," she confessed. "I want to know, Are you so fond of her that you wouldn' give her up, not on any account?"

Cai flushed again. "Well, missy, since you put it that way, we'll make it so."

Still the answer did not appear to satisfy the child. She fidgeted in her chair a little, but without offering to go.

"Not for no one in the wide world?" she asked at length.

"Why, see here,"—Cai met her gaze shyly—"isn't that the right way to feel when you want to make a woman your wife?"

"Ye-es—I suppose so," admitted Fancy with a sigh. "But it makes things so awkward——" She paused and knit her brows, as one considering a hard problem.

"What's awkward?"

Her response to this, delayed for a few seconds, was evasive when it came.

"I used to think you an' Cap'n Hunken was such friends there was nothin' in the world you wouldn' do for him."

"Ah!" Cai glanced at her with sharp suspicion. "So that's the latest game, is it? He's been gettin' at you—a mere child like you!—and sends you off here to work on my feelin's! . . . I thought better of 'Bias: upon my soul, I did."

"An' you'd better go on thinkin' better," retorted Fancy with spirit. "Cap'n Hunken sent me? What next? . . . Why, he never spoke a word to me!"

"Then I don't see——"

"Why I'm here? No, you don't; but you needn't take up with guesses o' *that* sort."

"I'm sorry if I mistook ye, missy."

"You ought to be. Mistook me?—O' course you did. And as for Cap'n Hunken's sendin' me, he don't even know yet that he's lost his money: and if he did, he'd be too proud, as you ought to know."

"Lost his money?" echoed Cai. "What money?"

"Well, to start with, you don't suppose Mr Rogers got his stroke for nothin'? 'Twas the news about the *Saltypool* that bowled him out; an' between you an' me, in a few days there's goin' to be a dreadful mess. He always was a speckilator. The more money he made—and he made a lot, back-along—the more he'd risk it; and the last year or two his luck has been cruel. In the end, as he had to tell me—for I did all his writin', except when he employed Peter Benny—he rode to one anchor, and that was the *Saltypool*. He ran her *uninsured*."

"Uninsured?" Cai gave a low whistle. "But all the same," said he, "an' sorry as I am for Rogers, I don't see how that affects——"

"I'm a-breakin' it gently," said Fancy, not without a small air of importance. "Cap'n Hunken had a small sum in the *Saltypool* — a hundred pounds only."

"I wonder he had a penny. 'Tisn't like 'Bias to put anything into an uninsured ship."

"Mr Rogers did it without consultin' him. Cap'n Hunken didn' know, and *I* didn' know, for the money didn' pass by cheque. Some time back in last autumn—I've forgot the date, but the books 'll tell it—the old man handed me two hundred pound in notes, not tellin' me where they came from, with orders to pay it into his account: which I took it straight across to the bank——"

"Belay there a moment," interrupted Cai. "A moment since you mentioned *one* hundred."

"So I did, because we're talkin' of Cap'n Hunken. Two hundred there were, and all in bank notes; but only one hundred belonged to *him*—and I only found *that* out the other day, when he heard that Mr Rogers had put it into the *Saltypool*, and there was a row. As for the other—Lawks, you don't tell me 'twas yours!" exclaimed Fancy, catching at the sudden surmise written on Cai's face.

"Why not? . . . If he treated 'Bias that way? Sure enough," said Cai. "I took him a hundred pounds to invest for me, about that time."

"Did he pay you a dividend this last half-year?"

"To be sure—seven pound eight-an'-four."

"That was on the *Saltypool*," Fancy nodded. "And oh! Cap'n Hocken, I am so sorry! but that hundred pound o' yours is at the bottom of the sea."

"Well, my dear," said Cai after a pause, pulling a wry face, "to do your master justice, he warned me 'twas a risk. There's naught to do but pay up an' look pleasant, I reckon. 'Twon't break me."

"Cut the loss, you mean. The shares was paid up in full, and there can't be no call."

"You're knowledgable, missy: and yet you're wrong this time, as it happens. For (I may tell you privately) the money didn' belong to me, but to Mrs Bosenna, who asked me to invest it for her."

"Oh! — and Cap'n Hunken's hundred too?"

Cai reached a hand to the mantelpiece for the tobacco-jar, filled a pipe very deliberately, lit it, and drawing a chair up to the table, seated himself in face of her.

"I shouldn't wonder," said he, resting both arms on the table and eyeing her across a cloud of tobacco-smoke. "Though I don't understand what she — I mean, I don't understand what the game was."

"Me either," agreed the child, musing. "No hurry, though: I'll be a widow some day, please God—which is mor'n *you* can hope. But now we get to the point: an' the point is, you can pay the woman up. Cap'n Hunken can't."

"Why not?"

"He don't know it yet, but he can't."

"So you said: an' why not? I ask. Within a thousand pound 'Bias owns as much as I do."

The child stood up, pulled her chair across to the table, and reseating herself, gazed steadily across at him through the tobacco-smoke.

"Where d'ye keep your bonds an' suchlike?" she asked.

"In my strong-box, for the most part: two or three in the skivet of my sea-chest."

"You got 'em all?"

"All. That's to say, all except the paper for this hundred pounds, which 'twas agreed Rogers should keep."

"You're a lucky man. . . . Where did Cap'n Hunken keep his?"

"Darned if I know. Somewheres about. He was always a bit careless over his securities —an' so I've told him a dozen times."

"When did you tell him last?"

This was a facer, and it made Cai blink. "We haven't discussed these things much —not of late," he answered lamely.

"I reckoned not. He don't keep 'em in his strong-box?"

"He hasn't one."

"In his chest?"

"May be."

"But he don't. He's left 'em with Mr Rogers from the first, or I'm mistaken. I used to see the two bundles, his and yours, lyin' side by side on the upper shelf o' the safe when the old man sent me to unlock it an' fetch something he wanted — which wasn't often. Then, about six months back, I noticed as one was gone. I mentioned it to him, and he said as 'twas all his scrip — that was his word— made up in a parcel an' docketed by you, and that some time afterwards you'd taken it away."

"Quite correct, missy. And t'other one is 'Bias's, as I know. I had 'em in my hands together when I opened the safe as Mr Rogers told me to do, givin' me the key. I took out the two, not knowin' t'other from which, made sure, docketed mine careful — to take away — and put 'Bias's back in the safe afore lockin' it. That would be back sometime in October last."

Fancy nodded. "That's what he told me: and up to this mornin' I reckoned Cap'n Hunken's bonds was still

there, though it must be a month since I opened the safe. This mornin' I had a talk with Dad — he doesn't know the half about the master's affairs, nor how they've been these two years, and I didn' let on: but I allowed as we ought to look into things and call in Peter Benny — knowin' that Peter Benny was made execlator, if anything happened. So we agreed, and called him in: and I told Peter Benny enough to let him see that things were serious. In the end I fetched the keys, and he unlocked the safe. There was a good few papers in it, which he overhauled. But there wasn' no parcel 'pon the top shelf where I'd seen it last."

"Then you may depend he'd given it to 'Bias unbeknown to you, same as he handed mine over to me. Wasn' that Benny's opinion?"

"Oh, you make me tired!" exclaimed the wise child frankly. "As if I'd no more sense than to go there an' then an' frighten *him* — an' him with all those papers to look over!"

"Then if you're so shy about worriting Benny—and I don't blame you — why be in such a hurry to worrit yourself? 'Bias has the papers—that you may lay to."

Fancy tapped her small foot on the floor, which it just reached. "As if I should be wastin' time, botherin' you! On my way here I ran against Cap'n Hunken, and of course he wanted to hear the latest of master—said he was on his way to inquire. So I told him that matters was bad enough, but while there was life there was hope—the sort o' thing you *have* to say: and I went on that the business would be all in a mess for some time to come, and I hoped he'd got all his papers at home, which would save trouble. 'Papers?' said he. 'Not I!' —and I wonder I didn' drop: you might have knocked me down with a feather. 'Papers?' said he. 'I haven't seen 'em for months. *I* don't trouble about papers! But you'll find 'em in the safe all right, though I haven't seen 'em for months.' Those were the very words he used; and nothin' would interest him but to hear how the invalid was doin'. He went off, cheerful as a chaffinch. It's plain to me," Fancy wound up, "that he hasn't the papers. He trusted you, to start with, and he's gone on trustin' you and the master. Didn' you intejuce him?"

"Sure enough I did," Cai allowed. "But — confound it, you know! — 'Bias Hunken isn't a child."

"Oh! if that contents you ——" But well she knew it did not.

"Mr Rogers never would ——"

"I've told you," said Fancy, "more'n ever I ought to have told. There's no knowin', they say, what a man 'll do when he's in Queer Street: *and* the papers have gone: *and* Cap'n Hunken thinks they're in the safe, where they ain't: *and* I come to you first, as used to be his friend."

"Good Lord!" Cai stood erect. "If—if——"

"That's so," assented Fancy, seated and nodding. "If——"

"But it can't be!"

"But if it *is?*" She slipped from her chair and stood, still facing him.

He stared at her blankly. "Poor old 'Bias!" he murmured. "But it can't be."

"Right O! if you *will* have it so. But, you see, I didn' put the question out o' curiosity altogether."

"The question? What question?"

"Why, about Mrs Bosenna."

"What has Mrs Bosenna to do with—Oh, ay, to be sure! You're meanin' that hundred pounds." His wits were not very clear for the moment.

"No, I'm not," said Fancy, moving to the door. In the act of opening it she paused. "'Twas through you, I reckon, he first trusted master with his money."

"I—I never suggested it," stammered Cai.

"I'm not sayin' you did," the girl answered back coldly. "But he went to master for your sake, because you was his friend and he had such a belief in you. Just you think that out."

With a nod of the head she was gone.

Before leaving the house she visited the kitchen, to bid goodnight to Mrs Bowldler. But Mrs Bowldler was not in the kitchen.

She mounted the stairs and tapped at the door of Palmerston's attic chamber.

"Hullo!" said she, looking in, "what's become of Geraldine?" (Mrs Bowldler's Christian name was Sarah, but the two children vied in inventing others more suitable to her gentility).

"If by Geraldine you mean Herm-Intrude," said Palmerston, sitting up in bed and grinning, "she's out in the grounds, picking——"

"Culling," corrected Fancy. "Her own word."

"Well then—culling lamb mint."

"I should ha' thought sage-an'-onions was the stuffin' relied on by this establishment."

"Seasonin'," corrected Palmerston. "But what have *you* been doin' all this time?"

"My dear, don't ask!" Fancy seated herself at the foot of the bed. "If you *must* know, I've been playing Meddlesome Matty life-size. . . . These grown-ups are all so *helpless*—the men especially! . . . Feelin' better?"

"Heaps. 'Tis foolishness keepin' me in bed like this, and I wish you'd tell her so. *I'm* all right—'xcept in my mind."

"What's wrong with your mind?"

"'Shamed o' myself: that's all—but it's bad enough."

"There's no call to be ashamed. You did it in absence o' mind, and all the best authors have suffered from that. It's well known."

"To go through what I did," said Palmerston bitterly, "just to bring up two-an'-nine! 'Tis such a waste of material!"

"That's one way of puttin' it, to be sure."

"I mean, for a book—for 'Pickerley.' I s'pose there's

not one man in a thousand—not one liter'y man, anyhow—has suffered anything like it. And I can't put it into the book!"

"No," agreed Fancy meditatively. "I don't suppose you could: not in 'Pickerley' anyhow. You couldn' make your 'ero swallow anything under a di'mond tiyara, and that's not easy."

"I'll have to write the next one about low life," said Palmerston. "If only I knew a bit more about it! Mrs Bowldler says it can be rendered quite amusin', and I wouldn' mind makin' myself the 'ero."

"Wouldn't you. Well, *I* should, and don't let me catch you at it! The man as I marry 'll have to keep his head up and show a proper respect for hisself."

Poor Palmerston stared. The best women in the world will never understand an artist.

CHAPTER XXV.—CAI RENOUNCES.

If this thing had happened——?

After Fancy left him Cai dropped into his arm-chair, and sat for a long while staring at the paper ornament with which Mrs Bowldler had decorated his summer hearth. It consisted of a cascade of paper shavings with a frontage of paper roses and tinsel foliage, and was remarkable not only for its own sake but because Mrs Bowldler had chosen to display the roses upside down. But though Cai stared at it hard, he observed it not.

For some minutes his mind refused to work beyond the catastrophe. "If *it* had happened—if 'Bias had indeed lost all his money. . . ."

He arose, lit a pipe, and dropped back into his chair.

It may be that the tobacco clarified his brain. . . . Of a sudden the child's words recurred and wrote themselves upon it, and stood out, as if traced in fire—

"*He went to master for your sake, because you was his friend and he had such a belief in you.*"

Ay, that was true, and in a flash it lit up a new pathway, down which he followed the thought in the child's mind only to lose it and stand aghast at his own reflections.

"'Bias went to Rogers through his belief in me.'

—'I did not encourage him. On the other hand, I said nothing to hinder him.'

—'Yet, afterwards and in practice, I did encourage him, going to Rogers with him and discussing our investments together.'

—'In a dozen investments we acted as partners.'

—'He was my friend, and in those days entirely open with me. He let me read all his character. I knew him to be strict in paying his debts, uneasy if he owed a sixpence, yet careless in details of business, and trustful as a child.'

—'Then this quarrel sprang up between us, and I let him go his way. I had no right to do that, having led him so far. In

a sense, he has gone on trusting me—that is, he has gone on trusting Rogers for my sake. To be quit of responsibility, I should have given him fair warning.

—'I ought to have gone to him and said, "Look here; Rogers is a friend of mine, and known to me from childhood. There's honesty in him, but 'tis like streaks in bacon; and for some reason or another he chooses that all his dealin's with me shall keep to the honest streak. If you ask me how I know this, 'twouldn't be easy to answer: I *do* know it, and I trust him as I'd trust myself, a'most. But Rogers isn't a man for everyone's money, and there's many as don't scruple to call him a knave. He hasn't known you from a child, and you haven't known him. You'll be safe in putting it that what he's done honest for you he's done as my friend——"'

Here Cai was seized by a new apprehension.

—'Ay, and—the devil take it!—I've let Rogers see, lately, that 'Bias and I had dissolved partnership and burnt the papers! 'Twouldn't take more than that to persuade Rogers he was quit of the old obligation towards 'Bias—himself in difficulties too, and 'Bias's money under his hand.'

—'Good Lord! . . . Suppose the fellow even allowed to himself that he was *helping* me! If Mrs Bosenna——?'

At this point Cai came to a full stop, appalled. Be it repeated that neither he nor 'Bias had wooed Mrs Bosenna for her wealth; nor until now had her wealth presented itself to either save in comfortable afterthought.

Cai sat very still for a while. Then drawing quickly at his pipe, he found that it was smoked out. He arose to tap the bowl upon the bars of the grate. But they were masked and muffled by Mrs Bowldler's screen of shavings, and he wandered to the open window to knock out the ashes upon the slate ledge. Returning to the fireplace, he reached out a hand for the tobacco-jar, but arrested it, and laying his pipe down on the table, did something clean contrary to habit.

He went to the cupboard, fetched out decanter, water-jug, and glass, and mixed himself a stiff brandy-and-water.

"Hullo!" said a voice outside the window. "I didn' know as you indulged between meals."

It was Mr Philp, staring in.

"I heard you tappin' on the window-ledge, and I thought maybe you had caught sight o' me," suggested Mr Philp.

"But I hadn't," said Cai, somewhat confused.

"I said to myself, 'He's beckonin' me in for a chat': and no wonder if 'tis true what they're tellin' down in the town."

"Well, I wasn't," said Cai, gulping his brandy-and-water hardily. "But what are they tellin'?"

"There's some," mused Mr Philp, "as don't approve of solitary drinkin'. Narrow-minded bodies *I* call 'em. When a man is in luck's way, who's to blame his fillin' a glass to it—though some o'

course prefers to call in their naybours; an' *that*'s a good old custom too."

Cai ignored the hint. "What are they tellin' down in the town?"

"All sorts o' things, from mirth to mournin'. They say, for instance, as you and the Widow have fixed it all up to be married this side o' Jubilee."

"That's a lie, anyway."

"And others will have it as the engagement's broken off by reason of your losin' all your money in Johnny Rogers's smash?"

"And that," said Cai, "is just as true as the other. But who says that Rogers has gone smash?"

"Everyone. I tackled Tabb upon the subject this mornin', and he couldn' deny it. The man's clean scat. He's been speckilatin' for years: I always looked for this to be the end, and when they told me the *Saltypool* wasn't insured, why, I drew my conclusions. As I was sayin' to Cap'n Hunken just now——"

"Eh? . . . Where is he?"

"Who?"

"'Bias Hunken. You said as you been speakin' with him——"

"Ay, to be sure, over his garden wall. I looked over and saw him weedin' among the rose-bushes, an' pulled up to give him the time o' day."

"You didn' tell him about the *Saltypool?*"

"As it happens, that's just what I did. He'd heard she was lost, but he'd no notion Rogers hadn't taken out an insurance on her, and he seemed quite fetched aback over it."

"The devil!"

"I'm sorry you feel like that about him. As I was tellin' him, when I heard your tap here at the window——"

"But I don't—and I wasn' tappin' for you, either."

"Appears not," said Mr Philp, with a glance at the empty glass in Cai's hand.

"Where is he? Still in the garden, d'ye say?"

"Ay: somewheres down by the summer-house. Says *I*, when I heard you tappin', 'That's Cap'n Hocken,' says I, 'signallin' me to come an' wish him joy, an' maybe to join him in a drink over his luck. And why not?' say I. 'Stranger things have happened.'"

"You'll excuse me. . . . If he's in his garden, I want a chat with him." Cai hurried out to the front door.

"Maybe you'd like me to go with you," suggested Mr Philp, ready for him.

"Maybe I'd like nothin' of the sort," snapped Cai. "Why should I?"

"Well, if you ask *me*, he didn' seem in the best o' tempers, and it might come handy to take along a witness."

"No, thank'ee," said Cai with some asperity. "You just run along and annoy somebody else."

He descended the garden, to find 'Bias at the door of his summer-house, seated, and puffing great clouds of tobacco-smoke.

"Good evenin'!"

"Good evenin'," responded 'Bias in a tone none too hospitable.

"You don't mind my havin' a word with you?"

"Not if you'll make it short."

"I've just come from Philp. He's been tellin' you about the *Saltypool*, it seems."

"Well?"

"She was uninsured."

"And on top o' that, the fools overloaded her."

"And 'tis a serious thing for Rogers."

"Ruination, Philp tells me—that's if you choose to believe Philp."

"I've better information than Philp's, I'm sorry to say."

"Whose?"

"Fancy Tabb's."

"She didn' tell me so when I saw her to-day."—(And good reason for why, thought Cai.)—"Still, if she told you, you may lay there's some truth in it. That child don't speak at random. I don't see, though, as it makes much difference, up *or* down?"

"No difference?"

"I didn' say 'no difference.' I said 'not much.' Ruination's not much to a man already down with a stroke."

"Oh, . . . *him?*" said Cai. "To tell the truth, I wasn't thinkin' about Rogers, not at this moment."

"No?" queried 'Bias sourly. "Then maybe I'm doin' you an injustice. I thought you might be pushin' your way in here to suggest our doin' something for the poor chap." Before Cai had well recovered from this, 'Bias went on, "And if so, I'd have answered you that I didn' intend to be any such fool."

"I—I'm afraid," owned Cai, "my thought wasn' anything like so unselfish. It concerned you and me, rather."

"Thinkin' of me, was you?" 'Bias stuffed down the tobacco in his pipe with his forefinger. "I reckon that's no game Caius Hocken, to be takin' up again after all these months; and I warn you to drop it, for 'tis dangerous."

Whatever his faults, Cai did not lack courage. "I don't care a cuss for threats, as you might know by this time. What I owe I pay,—and there's my trouble. I introduced you to Rogers, didn't I?"

"That's true," agreed 'Bias slowly. "What of it?"

"Why, that I'm in a way responsible that you took your affairs to him."

"Not a bit."

"But it follows. Surely you must see——"

"No, I don't. I ain't a child, and I'll trouble you not to hang about here suggestin' it. I didn' trust Rogers till I saw for myself he was a good man o' business and the very sort I wanted. He served me well enough; and, well or ill, I don't complain to you."

"See here, 'Bias," said Cai desperately. "You may take this tone with me if you choose, but you don't choke me off by it, and you'll have to drop it sooner or later. I was your friend, back along—let's start with that."

"And a nice friend you proved!"

"Let's start with *that*, then," pursued Cai eagerly—so eagerly that 'Bias stared willy-nilly, lifting his eyebrows. "Put it, if you please, that I was your

friend and misled you to trust in Rogers, that you lost money by it——"

"Who said so?"

"I say so. Put it at the lowest—that you sunk a hundred pound in the *Saltypool*——"

"Eh?"

"In the *Saltypool*——" Cai met his stare and nodded. "And not your own money, neither. Mrs Bosenna——"

'Bias started and laid down his pipe. "Drop that!" he interjected with a growl.

"Nay, you don't frighten *me*," answered Cai valiantly. "We're goin' to talk a lot of Mrs Bosenna afore we've done. Present point is, she gave you a hundred pound to invest for her. She gave me the like."

"What!" 'Bias clutched both arms of his chair in the act of rising. But Cai held up a hand.

"Steady! She gave me the like. . . . You handed the money over to Rogers, and close on fifteen per cent he was makin' on it—in the *Saltypool*."

"Who—who told you?"

"Wait! I did the like. . . . Seven pounds eight-and-four was my dividend, whatever yours may have been—eh? You may call it a—a coincidence, 'Bias Hunken: but some would say as our minds worked on the same lines even when—even when——" Cai seemed to swallow something in his throat. "Anyhow, the money's gone, and we'll have to make it good."

"Well, I should hope so!"

"I'll see to *that*, 'Bias—whatever happens."

"So will I, o' course." 'Bias turned to refill his pipe.

Cai was watching him narrowly. "Happen that mightn't be none too easy," he suggested.

"Why so?"

"Heark'n to me now: I got something more serious to tell. The Lord send we may be mistaken, but—supposin' as Rogers has played the rogue?"

'Bias, not at all discomposed, went on filling his pipe. "I see what you're drivin' at," said he. "'Tis the same tale Philp was chantin' just now, over the wall; how that Rogers had lost his own money and ours as well, and 'twas in everybody's mouth. Which I say to you what I said to him: 'Tis the old story,' I says; 'let a man be down on his back, and every cur 'll fly at him.'"

"But suppose 'twas true? . . . Did Rogers ever show the bonds and papers for your money?"

"'Course he did. Showed me every one as they came in, and seemed to make a point of it. Made me count 'em over, some time back. Wouldn' let me off till I'd checked 'em, tied 'em up in a parcel, docketed 'em, sealed 'em, and the Lord knows what beside. Very dry work. I claimed a glass o' grog after it."

"And then you took 'em away?" asked Cai, with a sudden hope.

"Not I. For one thing, they're vallyble, and I don't keep a safe. I put 'em back in the old man's—top shelf—alongside o' yours."

Cai groaned. "They're missin', then!"

"Who told you?"

"The child—Fancy Tabb."

'Bias looked serious. "Why didn' she come to me, I wonder?"

"I reckon—knowing what friends we'd been—she left it to me to break the news."

"I won't believe it," declared 'Bias slowly. But he sat staring straight at the horizon, and after each puff at the pipe Cai could hear him breathing hard.

"The child's not given to lyin'. And yet I don't see—Rogers bein' helpless to open the safe on his own account. At the worst 'tis a bad job for ye, 'Bias."

"Eh? . . . Means sellin' up an' startin' afresh: that's all—always supposin' there's jobs to be found, at our age. I don't know as there wouldn't be consolations. This here life ashore isn't all I fancied it."

Now Cai had in mind a great renunciation: but unfortunately he could not for the moment discover any way to broach it. He played to gain time, therefore, awaiting opportunity.

"As for getting a job," he suggested, "there's no need to be downcast: no need at all. If the worst came to the worst, there's the *Hannah Hoo*, f'r instance, and a providence she never found a buyer."

"Ay, to be sure—I'd forgot the bark'nteen."

"Come!" said Cai, with a quick smile, playing up towards his grand *coup*. "What would you say to shippin' aboard the *Hannah Hoo?*"

"What?—as mate under *you?* . . . I'd say," answered 'Bias slowly, "as I'd see you damned first."

"But"—Cai stared at him in bewilderment—"who was proposin' any such thing? As skipper I thought o' you—what elst? Leastways——"

"And you?"

"Me? . . . But why? There's no call for *me* goin' to sea again."

"Ah, to be sure," said 'Bias bitterly, "I was forgettin'. You'll stay ashore and make up your losses by marryin'!"

"But I haven't *had* any losses," stammered Cai. "Not beyond the hundred pound in the *Saltypool*. . . . Didn't I make that plain?"

"No, you didn't." 'Bias laid down his pipe. "Are you standin' there and tellin' me that *your* papers are all right and safe?"

"To be sure they are. Rogers handed 'em over to me, and I took 'em home and locked 'em in my strong-box—it may be four months ago."

"Ay, that would be about the time. . . . Well, I congratulate you," said 'Bias, with deepening bitterness of accent. "The luck's yours, every way, and that there's no denyin'."

"Wait a bit, though. You haven't heard me finish."

"Well?"

"Since this news came I've been thinkin' pretty hard over one or two things . . . over our difference, f'r instance, an' the cause of it. To be plain, I want a word with you about—well, about Mrs Bosenna."

"Stow that," growled 'Bias. "If you've come here to crow——"

"The Lord knows I've not

come here to crow. . . . I've come to tell you, as man to man, that I don't hold 'twas a pretty trick she played us over them two hundreds. You may see it different, and I hope you do. I don't bear her no grudge, you understand? . . . But if you've still a mind to her, and she've a mind to you, I stand out from this moment, and wish 'ee luck!"

'Bias stood up, stiff with wrath.

"And the Lord knows, Cai Hocken, how at this moment I keep my hands off you! . . . Wasn't it bad enough before, but you must stand patronisin' there, offerin' me what you don't want? First I'm to ship in your sarvice, eh? When that won't do, I'm to marry the woman you've no use for? And there was a time I called 'ee friend! Hell! if you must poison this garden, poison it by yourself! Let me get out o' this. Stand aside, please, ere I say worse to 'ee!"

He strode by, and up the garden path in the gathering twilight.

Poor 'Bias!

Poor Cai, too! His renunciation had cost him no small struggle, and he had meant it nobly; but for certain he had bungled it woefully.

His heart was sore for his friend: the sorer because there was now no way left to help. The one door to help — reconcilement — was closed and bolted: closed through his own clumsiness.

It had cost him much, a while ago—an hour or two ago, no more—to resign his pretensions to Mrs Bosenna's hand. The queer thing was how little —the resolutions once taken— Mrs Bosenna counted. It was 'Bias he had lost.

As he sat and smoked, that night, in face of Mrs Bowldler's fire-screen, staring at its absurd decorations, it was after 'Bias that his thoughts harked— always back, and after 'Bias— retracing old friendship faithfully as a hound seeking back to his master.

'Bias would never think well of him again. As a friend, 'Bias was lost, had gone out of his life. . . . So be it! Yet there remained a 'Bias in need of help, though stubborn to reject it: a 'Bias to be saved somehow, in spite of himself, an unforgiving 'Bias, yet still to be rescued.

Cai smoked six pipes that night, pondering the problem. He was aroused by the sound of the clock in the hall striking eleven. Before retiring to bed he had a mind to run through his parcel of bonds and securities on the chance—since he and 'Bias had made many small investments by consent and in common — of finding some hint of possible salvage.

His strong-box stood in a recess by the chimney-breast. A stuffed gannet in a glass case surmounted it—a present from 'Bias, who had shot the bird. The bird's lifelike eye (of yellow glass) seemed to watch him as he thrust the key into the lock.

He took out the parcel, laid it on the table under the lamp, and—with scarcely a glance at the docket as he untied the tape—spread out the papers

with his palm much as a card-player spreads wide a pack of cards before cutting. . . . He picked up a bond, opened it, ran his eye over the superscription, and tossed it aside.

So he did with a second—a third—a fourth.

On a sudden, as he took up the fifth and, before opening it, glanced at the writing on the outside, his gaze stiffened. He sat upright.

After a moment or two he unfolded the paper. His eyes sought and found two words—the name "Tobias Hunken."

He turned the papers over again. Still the name not his —"Tobias Hunken!"

He pushed the paper from him, and timorously, as a man possessed by superstitious awe, put out his fingers and drew forward under the lamplight the four documents already cast aside.

The name on each was the same. The bonds belonged to 'Bias. By mistake, those months ago, he had carried them off and locked them up for his own.

Should he arouse 'Bias to-night and tell him of the good news? He gathered up the bonds in his hand, went to the front door, unbarred it, and stepped out into the roadway. Not a light showed anywhere in the next house.

Cai stepped back, barred the door, and sought his chamber, after putting out the lamp. He slept as soundly as a child.

CHAPTER XXVI.—'BIAS RENOUNCES.

"Is Cap'n Hunken upstairs?"

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Mr Tabb from behind his pile of biscuit tins and soap-boxes. The pile had grown—or so it seemed to Cai—and blocked out more of the daylight than ever. "Won't you step up? You'll be kindly welcome."

"I was told I should find him here." Cai, on requesting Mrs Bowldler that morning to inform him how soon Captain Hunken would be finishing breakfast, had been met with the information that Captain Hunken had breakfasted an hour before, and gone out. ("Which, said Mrs Bowldler, "it becomes not one in my position to carry tales between one establishment and another: but he bent his steps in the direction of the town. I beg, sir, however, that you will consider this to be strickly between you and me and the gate-post, as the saying is.") Cai at once surmised the reason of this early sallying forth, and, following in chase, ran against the Quaymaster, from whom he learnt that 'Bias had entered the ship-chandler's shop half an hour ago. "He has not since emerged," added the Quaymaster Bussa darkly, as doubtful that in the interim Captain Hunken might have suffered forcible conversion into one of the obscurer "lines" of ship-chandlery, wherein so much purports to be what it is not.

—"I was told I should find him here," said Cai. "But would ye mind fetchin' him down to me? The fact is, I want him on a matter of private business."

Mr Tabb considered for a moment. "If I may advise, sir," he suggested meekly, "you'll find it as private up there as anywhere. The master's past hearin' what you say—or, if he hears, he's past takin' notice: whereas down here, you're liable to be interrupted by customers—let alone that I mustn't leave the shop. And," concluded Mr Tabb, "I would hardly recommend the Quay. Mr Philp's just arrived there."

On recovering from his previous stroke, Mr Rogers had given orders that, if another befell him, his bed was to be fetched downstairs and laid in the great bow-window of the parlour. There Cai found him with Fancy in attendance, and 'Bias seated on a chair by the bedside.

"Good-mornin'," Cai nodded, hushing his voice, and advanced towards the bed almost on tiptoe. "He won't recker-nise me, I suppose?"

The invalid reclined in a posture between lying and sitting, his back propped with pillows, his eyes turned with an expressionless stare towards the harbour. Save for its rigidity and a slight drawing down of the muscles on the left side of the mouth, there was nothing to shock or terrify in the aspect of the face, which kept, moreover, its customary high colour.

"He can't show it, if that's what you mean," answered Fancy. "But he knows us, somewhere at the back of his eyes—of that I'm sure. I got to be very clever watchin' his eyes, the last stroke he had, and there was quite a different look in 'em when he was pleased, or when he was troubled or wanted something. If you go over quiet and stand by the window, right where he must see you if he sees at all, maybe you'll notice what I mean."

But Cai, though he obeyed, and stood for a moment in the direct line of their vision, could detect no change in the unwinking eyes.

"Cap'n Hunken will even have it that he hears what's said, or scraps of it. But that I don't believe. . . . I believe 'tis but a buzzin' in his ears, with no sense to it, an' 'twould be jus' the same if we was the band of the R'yal Lifeguards."

"Well, whether he hears or not, I've a piece o' news for 'Bias Hunken, here. . . . P'raps he'd like to step outside an' discuss it?" suggested Cai awkwardly, remembering how he and 'Bias had parted overnight.

"I don't want to hear anything you can say," growled 'Bias.

"Oh yes, you do! . . . I reckoned as you'd be down here, first thing after breakfast, sarchin' for them papers we talked about."

"Did you, now?"

"And I tried to catch you afore you started; but you'd breakfasted early. . . . Well, the long and short is, they're

not lost after all!" Cai produced the bundle triumphantly.

"Eh! Where did you find 'em?" asked Fancy, while 'Bias took the parcel without a word of thanks, glanced at it carelessly, and set it down on the little round table beside the bed.

"In my strong-box. . . . There was two parcels, pretty much alike, on the top shelf of the safe yonder, and I must have taken 'Bias's by mistake. I'm glad, anyway," he went on, turning with moist eyes upon 'Bias, who appeared to have lost interest in the conversation. "I'm glad, anyway, t' have eased your mind so soon, let alone to have cut short your sarchin' which must ha' been painful enough—in a house o' sickness."

"Who was sarchin'?" asked 'Bias curtly. "Not me."

"And that's true enough," corroborated Fancy. "Why, Cap'n Hunken has never mentioned the papers! I guessed as you hadn' told him they was missin'."

"Eh? . . . I thought—I made sure, by his startin' down here so early——"

"Not a word of any papers did he mention," said Fancy. "He just come early to sit an' keep master company, havin' a notion that his poor old mind takes comfort from it somehow. Seven hours he sat here yesterday, an' never so much as a pipe of tobacco the whole time. Doctor said as a bit o' tobacco-smoke wouldn' do any harm in the room: but Cap'n Hunken allows as he'll be on the safe side."

Cai started. . . . For aught 'Bias knew then—as indeed 'Bias had reason to suspect—this husk of a man, helpless on the bed, had robbed him of his all, ruined him, left him no prospect but to begin life over again when late middle-age had sapped his vigour, attenuated the springs of action, left sad experience in the room of hope. And 'Bias's thought, ignoring it all, had been to sit beside this man's calamity, on the merest chance of piercing it with one ray of comfort!

Whereupon, as goodness takes inspiration from goodness, in Cai's heart, too, a miracle happened. He forgot himself, forgot his loss which was 'Bias's gain: forgot that, keeping his surly attitude, 'Bias had uttered neither a "thank you" nor a word of pity. Old affection, old admiration, old faith and regard came pouring back in a warm tide, thrilling, suffusing his consciousness, drowning all but one thought—one proud thought that stood like a sea-mark above the flood, justifying all—"Even such a man I made my friend!"

For a long time Cai stared. Then, as 'Bias made no sign of lifting his sullen gaze from the strip of carpet by the bed, he turned half-about towards the door.

"'Bias Hunken," said he gently, "you're a good man, an' deserved this luck better'n me. . . . If you can't put away hard thoughts just yet, maybe you'll remember, some day, that I wished 'ee long life to enjoy it."

His hand was on the door. "Here, though—hold hard!"

put in Fancy, who had picked up the bundle of papers. "I don't think Cap'n Hunken understands; nor I don't clearly understand myself. Was it *both* packets you carried home, sir, or only this one?"

"I thought as I'd made it clear enough," answered Cai. His eyes were still on his friend, and there was weariness as well as pain in his voice. "There's only one packet—'Bias's—what you have in your hand. I must have carried it home by mistake."

"Then your's is missin'?"

"That's so," said the broken man quietly.

The child turned and walked to the window. On her way she halted a moment and peered earnestly into the invalid's eyes, as if the riddle might possibly be read there. But they were vacant and answered her nothing. Then for some twenty seconds, almost pressing her forehead to the window-pane, she stood and gazed out upon the glancing waters of the harbour.

"There's only one thing to be done——" She wheeled about sharply. "Why, wherever *is* the man? . . . You don't mean to tell me," she demanded of 'Bias indignantly, "that you sat there and let him go!"

"I couldn' help his goin', could I?" muttered 'Bias, but his eyes were uneasy under the wrath in hers.

"You couldn' help it?" she echoed in scorn, and pointed to the figure on the bed. "Here you come playin' the Early Christian over a man that, for aught you knew, had robbed you to a stair: and when 'tis your tried friend fetchin' back riches to you—fairly bringin' you back to life at the cost o' bein' a beggar hisself—you let him go without so much as a thank'ee!"

"Cai Hocken don't want my thanks."

"Didn't even want politeness, I suppose—after runnin' here hot foot with the news that made you rich an' him a poor man! Oh, you're past all patience! . . . Who should know what he wanted an' didn't get—I, that had my eyes on his face, or you, that sat like a stuck pig, glowerin' at the carpet?"

"Gently, missy! . . . There—there didn' seem anything to say."

"There was one thing to say," answered the girl sternly, "and there's one thing to be done."

"What's that?"

"It mayn't be an easy thing, altogether. But you'll be glad of it afterwards, and you may as well make up your mind to it."

"Out with it!"

"Mrs Bosenna—Why, what's the matter?"—for 'Bias had interrupted with a short laugh.

"I'd forgot Mrs Bosenna for the moment."

"Right. Then go on forgettin' her, an' give her up. When you come to think it over," urged Fancy, with the air of a nurse who administers medicine to a child, "you'll find 'tis the only fit an' proper thing to do."

Again 'Bias laughed, and this time his laugh was even shorter and grimmer than before.

"Well and good—but wait

one moment, missy! D'ye know what Cai Hocken said to me, last night in the garden, when he reckoned as I'd lost my money? No, you don't. 'Look here,' he said, 'if you've still a mind to that woman and she've a mind to you, I'll stand aside.' That's what he said: and d'ye know what I answered? I told him to go to hell."

"I see." Fancy stood musing.

"Makes it a bit awkward, eh?—Cai bein' a man of spirit, with all his faults."

"Well," she decided, "unless we can find his money for him, he'll have to marry her, whether or no. 'Faults,' indeed? I believe," went on the wise child, "you two be more to one another than that woman ever was to either, or ever will be."

"We won't discuss that," said 'Bias, "now that Cai's got to marry her."

. . . . . .

Cai retired to bed early that night, wearied in all his limbs with much and aimless walking. If, as he trudged highroad or lane in the early summer heat, any thought of Mrs Bosenna arose for a moment and conquered the anodyne of bodily exercise, it was not a thought of grudging her to 'Bias. By the turn of Fortune's wheel 'Bias would win her now. To *him*, at all events, she was lost. Cai had never courted her for her money: but he had courted without distrust, on the strength of his own security in a competence. At the back of his mind there may have lurked a suspicion that Mrs Bosenna, as a business woman, was not in the least likely to bestow her hand on a penniless sailor: but there was no reason why he should allow this suspicion to obtrude itself, since self-respect would have forbidden him, being penniless, to pursue the courtship.

No; if he thought of Mrs Bosenna at all, it was in a sort of dull rage against her sex: not specially against her, who happened to be her sex's delegate to work this particular piece of mischief, but generally against womankind, that with a word or two, a look or two, it could rob a man of a friend—and of such a friend as 'Bias!

'Bias was undemonstrative. Cai had always prided himself on recognising a worth in him which did not leap to the eyes of other men—which hid itself rather, and shunned the light. It had added to his sense of possession that he constantly detected what others overlooked. In this matter of his behaviour to Rogers, 'Bias had eclipsed all previous records. It was (view it how you would) magnificent in 'Bias—a high Christian action—to tend, as he had tended, upon a man who presumably had robbed him of his all.

And at the same moment 'Bias could behave so callously to a once-dear friend—to a friend bringing glad tidings—to a friend, moreover, rejoicing to bring them, though they meant his own undoing! It was almost inconceivable. It was quite unintelligible unless you supposed the man's nature to be perverted, and by this woman.

Cai's heart was bruised. It ached with a dull insistent pain that must be deadened at all

costs, even though his own wrecked prospects called out to be faced promptly, resolutely, and with a practical mind. He would face them to-morrow. To-day he would tire himself out: to-night he would sleep.

And he slept, almost as soon as his head touched the pillow. His sleep was dreamless too.

"*Dame, get out and bake your pies—bake your pies—bake your pies*——"

"*Whoo-oo-sh!*"

He sat up in bed with a jerk. . . . What on earth was it? A squall of hail on the window? Or a rocket?—a ship in distress, perhaps, outside the harbour? . . .

"*Dame, get out and bake your pies*——" piped a high childish voice. Some one was unbarring a door below. A voice—'Bias's voice—spoke out gruffly, demanding what was the matter?

Was the house on fire? . . . No: outside the half-open window lay spread the moonlight, pale and tranquil. The night wind entering, scarcely stirred the thin dimity curtains. This was no weather for sudden hailstorms or for shipwreck. Cai flung back the bedclothes, jumped out—and uttered a sharp cry of pain. His naked foot had trodden on a gritty pebble, small but sharp.

Someone had flung a handful of gravel at the window.

He picked his way cautiously across the floor, and looked out. . . . In the moonlit roadway, right beneath, a girl—Fancy Tabb—was dancing a fandango, the while in her lifted hand she waved a white parcel.

"Ah, there you be!" she hailed, catching sight of him. "I've found 'em!"

"Found what?"

"Your papers! . . . I couldn' sleep till I told you: and I had to fetch Mr Benny along—here he is!"

"Good evening, Captain," spoke up Mr Peter Benny, stepping out into the roadway from the doorway where he had been explaining to 'Bias. "It's all right, sir. Your papers are found."

"Good evening, Benny! 'Tis kind of you, surely,"—Cai's voice trembled a little. "What's the hour?" he asked.

"Scarce midnight yet. I reckoned maybe you might be sittin' up, frettin' over this—'Twas the child here, though, that found it out and insisted on bringing me."

"After we'd locked up," broke in Fancy, "and just as I was packin' Dad off to bed, it came into my head to ask him—'I suppose you don't know,' said I, 'of anyone's havin' been to master's safe without my bein' told?' He thought a bit, and 'No,' says he; 'nobody 'cept myself, an' that but once.' '*You?*' says I, 'and whoever sent *you* there?' 'Why, the master hisself,' says Dad.—'Who else?' 'But what for?' I asks, feelin' as you might have knocked me down with a feather. 'I meant to ha' told you,' says Dad, 'but it slipped my mind. 'Twas one afternoon, when you was out on your walk. I heard Master's stick tap on the plankin' overhead, so I went up, thinkin' as he might be

wantin' his tea in a hurry. He told me to open the safe an' take out a packet o' papers from the top shelf; which I did.' 'What papers?' said I. 'How should I know?' says Dad: 'I don't meddle with his business — I've seen too much of it in *my* life. I didn' even glance at 'em, but locked the safe again, an' put 'em where he told me—which was in the japanned box by his chair!' 'Why,' says I, 'that's his Insurance Box as he called — the same as I handed to Mr Benny only yesterday, to take away and sort through!' . . . After that, as you may guess, I was like a mad person till we'd taken down the bolts again and I'd run to Mr Benny's."

"Ay," chimed in Mr Benny, "I was upstairs and half-undressed: but she had me dressed again an' down as if 'twas a matter of life and death. . . . And when we got out the box, there the papers were, sure enough. After that — for I saw their value to you—no one with a human heart could help running along with her, to bear the news. . . . So here we are."

"'Bias!" called Cai softly. "Didn' I hear 'Bias's voice below there, a while since?"

"Ay, here I be."—It was 'Bias's turn to step out from the shadow of his doorway into the broad moonlight. "And glad enough to hear this news."

"Would ye do me a favour? . . . Dressed, are you?"

"Ay—been sittin' up latish to-night."

"Well, I'm not azackly in a condition to step down—not for a minute or two; and I doubt Mrs Bowldler, if I called her, wouldn' be in no condition either. . . . 'Twould be friendly of you to ask Mr Benny in and offer him a drink; and as for missy——"

"No, thank 'ee, Cap'n," interposed Mr Benny. "Bringin' you this peace o' mind has been cordial enough for me—and for the child too, I reckon. Good-night, gentlemen!"

"Cap'n Hunken," said Fancy, "will you take the papers up to him? Then we'll go."

"May I bring the papers to 'ee?" asked 'Bias, lifting his face to the window.

"Ay, do — if they won't come in. . . . I'll step down and unbar the door."

He lit a candle and hurried downstairs, his heart in his mouth. By the time he had unbarred and opened, Mr Benny and Fancy had taken their departure; but their "good-nights" rang back to him, up the moonlit road, and his friend stood on the threshold.

CHAPTER XXVII.—MRS BOSENNA GIVES THE ROSE.

"It's a delicate thing to say to a woman," suggested Cai; "'specially when she happens to be your landlady."

"You do the talkin', of course," said 'Bias hurriedly.

"Must I? Why?"

"Well, to begin with, you knew her first."

"I don't see as that signifies."

"No? Well, you used to make quite a point of it, as I remember. But anyway you're a speaker, and it'll need some gift, as you say."

They had reached the small gate at the foot of the path. The day was hot, the high-road dusty. Cai halted and removed his hat; drew out a handkerchief and wiped his brow; wiped the lining of the hat; wiped his neck inside the collar.

"There's another way of lookin' at it," he ventured. "Some might say as 'twas more tactful to let your feelin's cool off by degrees."

"That's no way for me," said 'Bias positively. "Short and sharp's our motto."

"'Tis the best, no doubt," Cai agreed. "But there's the trouble of puttin' it into words. . . . I wish, now, I'd thought of consultin' Peter Benny. There'd be no harm, after all, in steppin' back and askin' his advice."

"No, you don't," said 'Bias shortly. "In my belief, if we hadn't made so free wi' consultin' Peter Benny in the past, we shouldn't be where we be at this moment."

If Cai's thought might be read in his face, he would not have greatly minded *that*, just now.

"In the matter of those letters, for instance——"

"I wonder if she ever got 'em?"

"You bet she did. She's been playin' us off, one against t'other, ever since."

"We let our feelin's carry us away."

"We let Peter Benny's feelin's carry us away," 'Bias corrected him. "That's the worst of these writin' chaps. Before you know where you are they'll harrow you up with feelin's you wasn't aware you entertained. Now I don't mind confessin' that, afore Benny had started to make out a fair copy I found myself over head an' ears in love with the woman."

"Me too," agreed Cai, musing.

"You're *sure* you're not any longer?"

"Eh? . . . Of course I am sure. I was only thinkin' how queer it was he should have pumped it out of us, so to say, with the same letters—almost to a syllable."

"There's two ways o' lookin' at that," said 'Bias thoughtfully. "You may put it that marryin's as common as dirt. Nine out o' ten indulges in it: and, that bein' so, the same form o' words 'll do for everybody, more or less, in proposin' it; just as (when you come to think) the same Marriage Service does for all when they come to the scratch. If all men meant different to all women, there wouldn't be enough dictionary to go round."

Cai shook his head. "I'm the better of it now," he confessed; "but I got to own that, at the moment, though Benny did well enough, there didn't seem enough dictionary to go round."

"I felt something of a rarity myself at the time," owned 'Bias. "But there's another explanation I like better, though

you'll think it far-fetched. . . . You and me—until this happened, there was never a cross word atween us, *nor* a cross thought?"

"That's so, 'Bias."

"Well, and that bein' so, if Benny hit the note for one, how could it help bein' the note for both? . . . I've had pretty rash thoughts about Benny: but—put it in that way—who's to blame the man? Or the woman for that matter?"

"I like that explanation better," said Cai.

"—Or the woman? She can't help not bein' a two-headed nightingale."

"To be sure she can't. . . . We might leave it at that and say no more about it. She'd be sure to understand in time."

"The agreement was, last night," insisted 'Bias with great firmness, "to put it to her straight and get it over."

They resumed their walk and mounted the pathway over which—from the first angle of the outbuildings to the garden gate — Banksian roses hung from the wall in heavy honey-coloured clusters of bloom. These were scentless and already past their prime; but by the gate at the south-east end of the house the white Banksian, throwing far wider shoots, saluted them with a scent as of violets belated. And within the gate the old roses were coming on with a rush—Provence and climbing China; Moschata alba, pouring over an arch in a cascade of bloom that hid all its green as with shell-pink foam; crimson and striped Damask along the border; with Paul Neyron eclipsing all in size, moss-roses bursting their gummy shells, Gloire de Dijon climbing and asserting itself above the falsely named "pink Gloire"; Reine Marie Henriette — which, grown by everybody, is perhaps the worst rose in the world. Gloire de Dijon rampant smothered the pretender and covered the most of its mildewing buds from sight; to be conquered in its turn by the sheer beauty of Maréchal Niel, whose every yellow star, bold on its stalk as greenhouses can grow it, shamed all feebler yellows. Devoniensis flung its sprays down from the thatch. La France and Ulrich Brunner competed—silver rose against cherry rose—on either side of the porch. Yet the fragrance of all these roses had to yield to that of the Cottage flowers, mignonette, Sweet-William, lemon verbena, Brompton stocks —annuals, biennials, perennials, intermixed—that lined the border, with blue delphiniums and white Madonna lilies breaking into flower above them.

Dinah, answering their ring at the bell after the usual delay for reconnaissance, opined that her mistress would probably be found in the new rose-garden. She said it, as they both observed, with a demure, half-mischievous smile.

"Amused to see us in company again, I reckon," said Cai to 'Bias as they went up through the old rose-garden, where the June-flowering H.P.'s ran riot in masses of colour from palest pink to deepest crimson.

"Ay," assented 'Bias, "we'll have to get used to folks smilin', these next few days. . . . Be-

tween ourselves, I never fancied that woman, though I couldn' give you any particular reason for it."

"Sly," suggested Cai.

"'Tis more than that. Slyness, you may say, belongs to the whole sex, and I've known men say as they found it agreeable, in moderation."

"I never noticed that in her mistress, to do her justice."

'Bias halted. "Look here. . . . You're *sure* you ain't weakenin'?"

"Sure."

"Because, as I told 'ee last night — and I'll say it again, here, at the last moment—she's yours, and welcome, if so be——"

"—'If so be as I didn' speak my true mind last night, when I said the same to you'—is that what you mean? Here, let's on and get it over!" said Cai, mopping his brow anew.

"'Tis a delicate business to broach, as you mentioned just now," said 'Bias dallying. "We'll have to be very careful how we put it."

"Very. As I told 'ee before, if you like to take it over——"

"Not at all. You're spokesman—only we don't want to put it so's she can round on us with 'nobody axed you.' And you gave me a turn, just then, by sayin' as you never noticed she was sly; because, as I reckon, that's the very point we've come to make."

"As how?"

'Bias stared at him in some perturbation. "Why, didn't she put that trick on us over the investment? And ain't we here to give her back her money? And wasn't it agreed as we'd open on her reproachful-like? an' then, one thing leadin' to another——"

"Ay, to be sure—I got all that in my mind really." Cai wiped the back of his neck and pocketed his handkerchief with an air of decision—or of desperation. "What you don't seem to know — though with any experience o' speakin' you'd understand well enough — is that close upon the last moment all your thoughts fly, and specially if folks *will* keep chatterin': but when you stand up and open your mouth—provided as nobody interrupts you . . ."

"I declare! If it isn't Captain Hocken — *and* Captain Hunken with him!"

At the creaking of the small gate, as Cai opened it, Mrs Bosenna had looked up and espied them. She dropped the bundle of raffia, with the help of which she had been staking such of her young shoots as were overlong or weighted down by their heavy blooms, and came forward with a smile of welcome.

"Come in — come in, the both of you! What lovely weather! You'll excuse my not taking off my gloves? We are busy, you see, and some of my new beauties have the most dreadful thorns! . . . By the way" — she glanced over her shoulder, following Cai's incredulous stare. "I believe you know Mr Middlecoat? Yes, yes, of course—I remember!" She laughed and beckoned forward the young farmer, who dropped his occupation among the rosebuds and shuffled forward obediently enough, yet

wearing an expression none too gracious.

"'Afternoon, gentlemen," mumbled Farmer Middlecoat, and his sulky tone seemed to show that he had not forgotten previous encounters. "Won't offer to shake hands. 'Cos why?" He showed the backs of his own, which were lacerated and bleeding. "Caterpillars," added Mr Middlecoat in explanation.

"There now!" cried Mrs Bosenna in accents of genuine dismay. "I'd no idea you were tearin' yourself like that—and so easy to ask Dinah to fetch out a pair o' gloves!"

"Do you mean to say, sir," asked Cai in his simplicity, "that caterpillars bite?"

"No, I don't," answered Mr Middlecoat. "But you can't get at 'em and avoid these pesky thorns."

Said Mrs Bosenna gaily,—"Mr Middlecoat called on me half an hour ago wi' the purpose to make himself disagreeable as usual—though I forget what his excuse was, this time—and I set him to hunt caterpillars."

"Dang it, look at my hands!" growled the young farmer, holding them out.

"And last month, wi' that spell of east wind, 'twas the green-fly. But I reckon we've mastered the pests by this time. Didn't find many caterpillars, eh?"

"No, I didn'," answered Mr Middlecoat, still sulkily. "But them as I did you bet I scrunched."

"Well, they deserved it, for the last few be the dangerousest. They give over the leaves to eat the buds. But 'tis labour well spent on 'em, and we'll have baskets on baskets now, by Jubilee Day."

"'Tis the Queen's flower—the royal flower—sure enough," said Cai, looking about him in admiration. He had not visited the new garden for some weeks, and on the last visit it had been but an unpromising patch stuck about with stiff, thorny twigs, all leafless, the most of them projecting but a few inches above the soil. The plants were short yet, and the garden itself far from beautiful; but the twigs had thrown up shoots, and on the shoots had opened, or were opening, roses that drew even his inexperienced eye to admire them.

"I'm afraid there's no doubt of it," said Mrs Bosenna. "I love the old H.P.'s: but you must grow the Teas and Hybrid Teas nowadays, if you want to exhibit. Yet I love the old H.P.'s, and I've planted a few, to hold their own and just show as they won't be shamed. See this one now—there's a proper Jubilee rose, and named *Her Majesty!* Brought out, they tell me, in 'eighty-five: but the Yankees bought up all the stock, and it didn't get back into this country until 'eighty-seven, the last Jubilee year. See the thorns on her, *and* the stiff pride o' stem, *and* the pride o' colour—fit for any queen! She's not the best, though. . . . She'll do for last Jubilee—not for this. Wait till you've seen the best of all!"

She led them to a plant—stunted by the secateurs, yet

vigorous—which showed, with three or four buds as yet closed and green, one solitary bloom, pure white and of incomparable shape.

"There!" said she proudly. "That's a tea, and the finest yet grown, to *my* mind. That's the rose for this Diamond Jubilee, and white as a diamond. A proper royal Widow's rose!"

"Is that its name?" asked Cai.

Mrs Bosenna laughed and plucked the bloom.

"On the contrary," said she with a mischievous twitch of the mouth, "'tis called *The Bride!* There's only one bloom, you see, and I can't offer to part it. Now which of you two 'd like it for a buttonhole?"

She held out the rose, challenging them.

"I—I—" stammered Cai, backing against 'Bias's knuckles which dug him in the back—"I grant ye, ma'am, 'tis a fine rose—a lovely rose—but for my part, a trace o' colour——"

"Bright red," prompted 'Bias.

"Bright red—for both of us——"

"And now I've plucked it," sighed Mrs Bosenna. "Well, if you won't, perhaps Mr Middlecoat will, rather than waste it."

Mr Middlecoat stepped forward and allowed the enormous bloom to be inserted in his buttonhole, where its pure white threw up a fine contrast to his crimsoning face.

"You won't think me forward, I hope?" said Mrs Bosenna, turning about. "The fact is—though I don't want it generally known yet—that yesterday Mr Middlecoat, in his disagreeable way, made me promise to marry him."

Before the pair could recover, she had moved to another bush.

"Red roses, you prefer? Red is rare amongst the Teas—there's but one, as yet, that can be called red—if this suits you? And, by luck, there are two perfect buttonholes."

She plucked the buds and held them out.

"It's name," said she, "is *Liberty*."

CHAPTER XXVIII.—JUBILEE.

For the best part of a week before the great Day of Jubilee Cai and 'Bias toiled together and toiled with a will, erecting the framework of a triumphal arch to span the roadway. Within-doors, in the intervals of household duty, Mrs Bowldler measured, drew, and cut out a number of capital letters in white linen, to be formed into a motto and sewn upon red Turkey twill, while Palmerston industriously constructed and wired gross upon gross of paper roses—an art in which he had been instructed by Fancy, who had read all about it in a weekly newspaper, 'The Cosy Hearth.' The two friends talked little to one another during those busy June days. Strollers-by—and it had become an evening recreation in Troy to stroll from

one end of the town to the other and mark how things were getting along for the 22nd —found Captain Hocken and Captain Hunken ever at work but little disposed to chat; and as everyone knew of the old quarrel, so everyone noted the reconciliation and marvelled how it had come to pass. Even Mr Philp was baffled. Mr Philp, passing and repassing many times a day, never missed to halt and attempt conversation; with small result, however.

"It's a wonder to me," he grumbled at last, "how men of your age can risk scramblin' about on ladders with your mouths constantly full o' nails."

In the evenings they supped together. Mrs Bowldler had made free to suggest this.

"Which," said Mrs Bowldler in magnificent anacoluthon, "if we see it as we ought, this bein' no ordinary occasion, but in a manner of speakin' one of Potentates and Powers and of our feelin's in connection therewith; by which I allude to our beloved Queen, whom Gawd preserve!—Gawd bless her! I say, and He *will*, too, from what I know of 'im—and therefore deservin' of our yunited efforts; and, that bein' the case, it would distinkly 'elp, from the point of view of the establishment (meanin' Palmerston and me) if we (meanin' you, sir, and Captain Hunken) could make it convenient to have our meals in common. . . . The early Christians were not above it," she added. "Not they! Ho, not,—if I may use the expression—by a long chalk!"

She contrived it so delicately that afterwards neither Cai nor 'Bias could remember precisely at what date—whether on the Wednesday or on the Thursday —they slipped back into the old comfortable groove.

The arch occupied their thoughts. After supper, as they sat and smoked, their talk ran on it: on details of its construction; on the chances (exiguous indeed!) of its being eclipsed by rivals in the town, some in course of construction, a few as yet existent only in the promises of rumour.

Cai would say, "I hear the Dunstans are makin' great preparations in their backyard. They mean to bring their show out at the last moment, and step it in barrels."

"I don't believe in barrels," 'Bias would respond. "Come a breeze o' wind, where are you? Come a strong breeze, and over you go, endangerin' life. It ought to be forbidden."

"No chance of a breeze, though." Cai had been studying the glass closely all the week.

"Fog, more like. 'Tis the time o' the year for fogs."

Other matters they discussed more desultorily: meetings of the Procession Committee, of the Luncheon Committee (all the parish was to feast together), of the Tree-planting Committee, of the Tea Committee; the cost of the mugs and the medals for the children; the latest returns handed in by Mr Benny, who had undertaken the task of calling on every householder, poor or rich, and collecting donations. But to the arch their talk recurred.

—And rightly: for in the arch they were building better than they knew. In it, though unaware (being simple men), they were rebuilding friendship.

By Saturday evening the scaffolding was complete, firmly planted, firmly nailed, firmly clasped together by rope—in sailors' hitches such as do not slip. They viewed it, approved it, and soberly, having gathered up tools, went in to supper. On Sunday they attended morning service in church, and oh! the glow in their hearts when, in place of the usual voluntary, the organ rolled out the first bars of "God Save the Queen," and all the worshippers sprang to their feet together!

On Monday the town awoke to the rumbling of waggons. They came in from the plantations where since the early June daybreak Squire Willyams's foresters and gardeners had been cutting young larches, firs, laurels, aucubas. The waggons halted at every door and each householder took as much as he required. So, all that day, Cai and 'Bias packed their arch with evergreens; until at five o'clock Mr Philp, happening along, could find no clink anywhere in its solid verdure. He called his congratulations up to them as, high on ladders, they affixed flags to the corner poles and looped the whole with festoons of roses.

And now for the motto to crown the work! Fancy Tabb coming up the roadway and pausing while she conned the structure, shading her eyes against the sun-rays that slanted over it, beheld Mrs Bowldler and Palmerston issue from the doorway in solemn procession, bearing between them a length of Turkey twill. Mrs Bowldler passed one end up to Captain Hocken, high on his ladder: Captain Hunken reached down and took the other end from Palmerston. Between them, as they lifted the broad fillet above the archway, its folds fell apart, and she read:—

MANY DAUGHTERS HAVE DONE VIRTUOUSLY
BUT THOU EXCELLEST THEM ALL.

"My! I'd like to be a Queen!"

"If I had my way, you WOULD," whispered Palmerston, who, edging close to her, had overheard.

"Eh? Is that Fancy Tabb?" interrupted Cai. He had happened to glance over his shoulder and spied her from the ladder. "Well, and what d'ee think of it?" he asked, as one sure of the answer.

"I was sayin' as I'd like to be a Queen," said Fancy. "Queen of England, I mean: none of your second-bests."

"Well, my dear," Cai assured her, bustling down the ladder, and staring up at the motto to make sure that it hung straight, "*that* you won't never be: but you're among the many as have done virtuously, and God bless 'ee for it! Which is pretty good for your age."

"*You*'re not," retorted the uncompromising child.

"Eh?"

"'Tis three days now since you've been near the old man, either one of 'ee. How would *you* like that, if you was goin' to hell?"

"Hush 'ee now! . . . 'Bias an' me had clean forgot—there's so much to do in all these rejoicin's! Run back and tell 'n we'll be down in half-an-hour, soon as we've tidied up here."

On their way down to visit the sick man, Cai and 'Bias had to pause half a score of times at least to admire an arch or a decorated house-front. For by this time even the laggards were out and working for the credit of Troy.

But no decorations could compare with their own.

"That's a handsome bunch, missus," called Cai to a very old woman, who, perched on a borrowed step-ladder, was nailing a sheaf of pink valerian (local name, "Pride of Troy") over her door-lintel. "Let me give 'ee a hand with that hammer," he offered; for her hand shook pitiably.

"Ne'er a hand shall help me—thank 'ee all the same," the old lady answered. "There, Cap'n . . . there's for Queen Victoria! an' it's done, if I die to-morrow." She tottered down to firm earth and gazed up at the doorway, her head nodding.

"She've *got* to be in London to-morrow, of course. . . . But what a pity she can't take a walk through Troy too! Main glad she'd be. . . . Oh, I know! She an' me was born the same year."

Of the doings of next day—the great day; of the feasting, the cheering, the salvo-firing, the marching, the counter-marching, the speechifying, the tea-drinking, the dancing, the illuminations, the bonfires; the tale may not be told here. Were they not chronicled, by this hand, in a book apart? And does not the chronicle repose in the Troy Parish Chest? And may not a photograph of the famous arch constructed by Captains Hocken and Hunken be discovered therein some day by the curious?

To be sure, Queen Victoria herself did not pass beneath that arch. But there passed beneath that arch many daughters who since have grown into women and done virtuously, I hope. If not, I am certain there was no lack of encouragement that day in the honest, smiling faces of Captain Hocken and Captain Hunken as they stood with proprietary mien, one on either side of the roadway, and each with an enormous red rose aglow in his buttonhole.

Pulvis et umbra sumus,—"The tumult and the shouting dies."—A little before ten o'clock that night Mr Middlecoat and Mrs Bosenna walked up through the dark to Higher Parc to see the bonfires. The summit commanded a view of the coast from Dodman to Rame, and inland to the

high moors which form the backbone of the county. Mrs Bosenna counted eighteen fires: her lover could descry sixteen only.

"But what does it matter?" said he. They had started the climb arm-in-arm: but by this time his arm was about her waist.

"My eyes are sharper than yours, then," she challenged.

"Very likely," he allowed. "Sure, they must be: for come to think I reckon 'em both in my list."

She laughed cosily.

"Shall we go over the ridge?" he suggested. "We may pick up one or two inland from my place."

"No," she answered, and mused for a while. "It's strange to think our two farms are going to be one henceforth. . . . The ridge has always seemed to me such a barrier. But I'll not cross it to-night. Good-bye!"

"Nay, but you don't go back alone. I'll see you to the door."

"Why? I'm not afraid of ghosts."

But he insisted: and so, arm linked in arm, they descended to Rilla, where the roses breathed their scent on the night air.

Cai and 'Bias—the long day over—sat in Cai's summer-house, overlooking the placid harbour. Loyal candles yet burned in every window on the far shore and scintillated their little time on the ripple of the tide. Above shone and wheeled in their courses the steady stars, to whom our royalties are less than a pinch of dust in the meanest unseen planet that spins within their range.

The door of the summer-house stood wide to the night. Yet so breathless was the air that the candles within (set by Mrs Bowldler on the table beside the glasses and decanters) carried a flame as unwavering as any star of the firmament. So the two friends sat and smoked, and between their puffed tobacco-smoke penetrated the dewy scents of the garden. Both were out-tired with the day's labours; for both were growing old.

"'Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all,'" murmured Cai. "'Twas a noble text we chose."

"Ay," responded 'Bias, drawing the pipe from his lips. "She've kept a widow just thirty-six years. An unusual time, I should say."

"Very," agreed Cai.

They gazed out into the quiet night, as though it held all their future and they found it good.

THE END.

TEST MATCH CRICKET OF 1912.

If at the end of last year we were inclined to prophesy a boom in cricket, we are now compelled to admit that the season of 1912 brought with it in the place of a boom a recurrence of the slump which set in three years ago. On the surface it is impossible to dissociate the disappointment of our expectations with the so-called Imperial Triangular contest. At the beginning of the year everything looked "set fair" for a brilliant and interesting season, and it was confidently predicted that the simultaneous visit of Australians and South Africans might be warranted to bring in a rich harvest of gate-money, and the series of nine Test Matches for the Imperial Championship would draw crowds such as had never been seen before to Lords, the Oval, and the other grounds selected. Only slowly we began to realise that these anticipations were not to be fulfilled, and long before the close of the season we arrived at the conclusion that of all wearisome things to watch, no form of cricket is quite in the same street with an Imperial Test Match.

To begin with, the weather, which, with a few lucid intervals, was abominably bad between the beginning of June and the end of August, was eminently calculated to damp not merely popular enthusiasm, but everything else into the bargain.

And in the second place, quarrels about business arrangements in Australia had effectually discounted the chances of the arrival of a really representative side from that quarter; while it was palpable to all judges of the game that the South Africans, so far from being able to contend on equal terms with a representative English or Australian side, might have been more in their proper element had they been qualified to enter for the County Championship.

To take the case of the Australians first. With them our main ground of quarrel is that their petty squabbling at home brought into too bold relief the fact that good money rather than good cricket is the primary object of their chronic invasions. With the final composition of their side there was less cause to grumble. It proved itself, until staleness overtook it later in the season, to be perfectly capable when fully extended, not merely of making hay with the South Africans, but of putting up a good fight with the best that we could bring against it. If we are not prepared to go to the length of asserting that the Australian team of 1912 attained to that standard of excellence shown by several of their predecessors, we are more inclined to fancy that the Colonials, in the course of passing through a transitional

period, have temporarily struck a bad patch in cricket than to believe that the preliminary squabble really weakened much beyond the prestige of the side. Indeed our verdict—take it for what it is worth—would be that the side we have lately beaten contained more elements of future success than did the victorious team of 1909. And this for the simple reason that at least half a dozen members of the former are in the process of climbing that ladder of time and experience which a corresponding number of the latter were even three years ago commencing to descend.

In any case it may be fairly said that Gregory's side, though singularly unfortunate in the matter of losing the toss and the choice of innings, put up quite as good a fight against our representative Elevens, reinforced by the presence of Fry and Spooner, as Hill's side did against Warner's Eleven in Australia. Furthermore, in extenuation of their comparative failure in the final Test Match played on the Oval, it must not be forgotten that our visitors were heavily handicapped by the iniquitous weather, and the resultant slowness and trickiness of the wicket, and were called upon to face the best bowler in the world on a pitch which, if never particularly good, was quite at its worst when they were batting. Finally, taking a line through the matches played at Lords against strong M.C.C. sides early in the season, when the ground was in comparatively good condition, we do not seem to gather that the Australian Eleven of 1909 was materially stronger than that of 1912. In the former year M.C.C., distinctly strong in all points of the game, won by a narrow majority; in 1912, putting into the field a side which if owing to an eleventh-hour defection was somewhat short of bowling, was undeniably strong in batting, the Club was decisively beaten. But, it will be said, the Australian Eleven of 1912 lost many more matches against County sides than their predecessors lost. The losing or winning of matches against Counties is, we fancy, a very poor criterion of merit or the reverse. As we have already pointed out, the question of good "business" has to be taken into consideration, and it is impossible to resist the conviction that the securing of a full three days' gate-money was in the eyes of our visitors at least as important as the winning of a match against a County. We do not for one instant desire to convey the impression that the Australians were ever out to lose, but even the best jockey in the world, who has not been anxious to win a particular race all the way, now and again times his effort too late, and so gets the worst of a tight finish. Put it this way, if you like. Would any man in his sober senses have been content to intrust the fortunes of English cricket to the Lancashire Eleven which twice over beat the Australians? Of course not. If we

want these business cricketers to show their very best form against a County side, we must proceed on the principle of offering them the whole of the gate-money if they win, half if they draw, and nothing if they lose. It is only fair to add that it is entirely our own fault that we do not get the very best cricket they can show from our visitors on every possible occasion. One way or another we have converted what used to be a cheery game into a serious and money-grubbing business, and we must not be surprised if others have followed our example. "In life," telegraphed Prince Henry of Prussia, apropos of our failure in the Olympic Games, "it often happens that the master is surpassed by his pupil." Wholly apart from this is the certainty that Gregory knew his business as captain of an International side better than to overwork his best bowlers by invariably employing them against the Counties. Foster's is by no means a solitary instance of a bowler's deterioration as a result of overwork. In the case of the Australians there was no question of a County Championship to be wrestled for. Their main business as cricketers was the winning of Test Matches, and the silencing of those critics at home who had predicted, even if they had not hoped, that in the absence of the heavy brigade the young and comparatively untried side would make no manner of show against the combined strength of England.

Once again we repeat our belief that the preliminary squabbling over financial arrangements did not materially weaken the Australian side, while nothing will induce us to believe that the inclusion of older players could have converted defeat into victory.

Innate reverence for great names is part and parcel of our English character, always inclined to be more or less snobbish; but in the cricket-field, at any rate, a great name, coupled with and handicapped by weight of years, a well-developed figure, and consequent loss of spring and activity, is not by way of winning matches. Such a combination bids for a draw often, but is seen at its best on the benches of the Pavilion. We had this lesson rubbed into us three years ago on the occasion of the last Australian visit, and then by way of compensation we rubbed it back again into the Australians in the winter of 1911-12. Did not the earlier results of the County Championship tell us the same tale? Where were the great names on the Northants side which up to the middle of July not merely held an unbeaten record, but had beaten Kent, a side full of great names, twice over within a month, and had won outright seven out of eleven matches? True, there were on the cobblers' side George Thompson, one of the most sterling middle-aged cricketers of the day, and S. G. Smith, who had figured once, and possibly ought to have figured oftener, for the Gentlemen at

Lords. But the bulk of the season's work was done by young and comparatively unknown players, who never allowed themselves to be oppressed by the feeling that in the ranks of the sides they were beating were to be found the best-known cricketers in England. And, curiously enough, their first and, as it turned out, solitary defeat was sustained at the hands of another County whose two best cricketers — neither of them much more than lads—were hardly known to Lillywhite's Guide till 1910, and only won their spurs as first-grade cricketers in 1911. "Old wood to burn, old wine to drink," &c., but for goodness' sake do not saddle a side with old cricketers to field either in the slips or in the country, even though their reputation as batsmen stands as high as Mount Atlas. Their defence may be as stolid as their figures, their occasional presence may be invoked to stiffen a weak-kneed side, as they will or ought to have outlived the age of nervousness; but their progress, whether as makers or savers of runs, is likely to be more stately than rapid, and the amount of balls that they will leave alone when batting, and of possible chances which they will be wisely content to ignore when they are fielding, is positively appalling. Our own private opinion is that of all those heroes who, following the example of Achilles, absented themselves from the field of action and remained in their tents, the man most missed was Cotter. If it used to amuse the critics to point out how bad a fast bowler he really was, the facts remain that over and over again he proved a bit too good—they still call it too bad—for our best batsmen, that he could be reckoned upon to hold pretty well any catch that came handy, and was never frightened, though often beaten, by our bowlers.

Whatever, in any case, they left at home, our Australian visitors, as some newspaper pointed out, had not forgotten to pack in their cricket-bags the true Test Match temperament. "Everybody knows what it is, but none can define it." So said the paper. Without, then, attempting to supply a formal definition, we will venture to remark that, to our thinking, the Test Match temperament is identical with "grit"—a quality that manifests itself in various forms in different individuals. In Kelleway's case, for instance, it took the form of a dogged determination never to take a liberty, or to allow either the flight of time or the boredom of the gallery to disturb the tenor of his way; in Macartney's, of a cheery self-confidence which took all risks, ignored all rules, or at least violated all canons of the game, and delighted everybody.

Having for the moment got on the subject of Macartney, we would remark that the match between England and Australia at Lords brought two facts into prominent relief. Of these, the first was that Mr Macalister, the gentle-

man who so strongly objected to the inclusion of Macartney on an Australian side, must be a singularly bad judge of a cricketer; the second, that Macartney himself is the most deliciously unorthodox and effective batsman we have ever watched,—more remarkable even than Jessop, as being more elegant, more capable of playing a good ball like a book, and affording more room for speculation. Admitting that Jessop on his best day is a perfect gem of a hitter, we prefer to watch Macartney, for the simple reason that we never seem to know what he is by way of doing next. Full of vitality, violating with success the old standard rule of keeping the right foot firm, he leaves it open to conjecture until the extreme psychological moment whether a straight ball shall be treated with respect or hit either to the off or the boundary. If his power of getting over the ball is marvellous for so short a man, it is hardly so marvellous as his knack of feinting in the first place to run away from a fast and slightly underpitched delivery, only to return to the attack and either hook the ball to one boundary or chop it to the other. In either case, the ball is at the boundary almost in the same instant as it has left the bat, proving that the little man is gifted with an unusually strong wrist, in addition to having the eye of a hawk and being extraordinarily quick on his feet. Add to his powers of batting the fact that he is smart in the field, and a more than ordinarily useful change bowler, and —*pace* Mr Macalister—Macartney may be written down as being very nearly, if not quite, the best all-round cricketer of the day.

Yet a third point of interest presented itself to the minds of the Pavilion critics at Lords, and although it has nothing whatever to do with Macartney, it seems better to mention it now than later on. It was a commonly discussed question which of the two captains showed up in that particular match as the worse manager of the bowling at his disposal. Fry, we should say for choice, but only for the reason that Gregory, as captaining the presumably weaker side, may have felt that the keeping down of the runs was of more immediate importance than the securing of wickets. But no manner of excuse was suggested for Fry's palpable errors of judgment in keeping Foster on for something like an hour and a half at a spell, when the young bowler was obviously tired, and the state of the wicket quite as obviously unsuited to his bowling, and in omitting to give Woolley a trial with the ball at all. Woolley may not be a very good bowler on that class of wicket, but every man on the side who could bowl at all ought to have taken his turn in the hope of dissolving the long partnership between Kelleway and Macartney.

To return to the Australian side, there was plenty of budding talent there, the most

conspicuous failing being the one that was least to be looked for in so young and active a lot—namely, a marked tendency to drop simple catches. Of course, quite difficult catches occasionally came to hand, and much of the ground fielding was excellent, but for some unaccountable reason an appreciable number of easy chances were dropped, and the catching, or rather the failure to catch, in the matches against the South Africans at Lords and against England at Manchester was about on a par with the display of "missing" given by the Gentlemen at the Oval.

Where there was a distinct shortage of really high-class batsmen, pretty well every member of the side showed that he could make runs on occasion, and if Minnett never really played up to his Australian form, Smith was a powerful hitter who with time and experience may develop into a second Lyon, while Jennings with his brilliancy often delighted the spectators almost as much as Kelleway bored them with his dogged defence. Bardsley, who on English wickets has proved himself to be the most consistently good batsman for a Test Match that ever came from Australia, and Macartney with his unique methods of rapid scoring, not only easily headed the averages, but seemed to have the happy knack of reserving their best efforts for state occasions, while in the Australian go-as-you-please-and-play-to-a-finish game Kelleway is likely to play an important part in the future.

And what shall be said about the bowling? In the first place, that if we have seen many sides equipped with one or more consistently better bowlers than were figuring in the Australian Eleven of 1912, the side has yet to be found which will contain more variety of attack, or more men capable of serving up once or twice in the course of an innings an almost unplayable ball. In the second place, that with such an extraordinary wealth of bowlers at his command, it is difficult to conceive on what principle Gregory selected his attackers for the particular occasion. It is open to doubt whether any captain ever found himself in such a quandary, and somehow or other we do not seem to envy the position of a somewhat elderly cricketer, who at the eleventh hour was called upon to take command of fourteen youths, more than half of whom were supposed to be able to bowl, but with whose several actualities or potentialities of real bowling talent he had little more than a passing acquaintance. Picture to yourself, if you can, the feelings of Mr Aislabie, if on his arrival at Rugby Station he had been met by Thomas, bearer of a note from Dr Arnold to the effect that in the unavoidable absence of Mr T. Brown, the Doctor would be much obliged if Mr Aislabie would kindly captain the School Eleven against M.C.C.! Impossible, you will say. But after all,

that was more or less Gregory's position. One only of his many bowlers had anything like an established reputation in that line. Not even he was supposed to be very good, and nearly every man Jack of the other seven had to be taken on trust. As we do not for a moment suppose that Gregory put all the eight names in a hat and trusted to the chapter of accidents, we must imagine that he did a good deal of thinking during his journey from Australia. Whitty was evidently the first choice for one end. For had not high authority singled out Whitty as the best bowler in Australia? And then we have a shrewd suspicion that on shipboard Maclaren was probably thought of as the proper man to commence the attack at the other. Long, however, before the Test Match at Lords the conclusion had been arrived at that Maclaren was likely to prove a very poor substitute for that much abused but withal most useful bowler, Cotter, with the result that the idea of playing a really fast right-handed bowler was discarded altogether. Third on the list came Kelleway, who bowled away at Lords, where he was kept in for too long, with the same dogged determination as he afterwards showed in batting. And after Kelleway we arrive at Hazlitt and Emery, who must be bracketed as equal in the art of arousing queer sensations in the minds of the spectators, to say nothing of those of the batsmen. Two or three times over in the course of an innings we saw Hazlitt send down a ball which one of our best batsmen, when he looked to be firmly set, and certainly had been at the wicket long enough to have got his eye in, apparently lost sight of entirely. A consistently good bowler Hazlitt may not be, but there is evidently from time to time a something about the flight of the ball that baffles alike description and the batsman. However, we are not a little relieved to gather from 'The Morning Post' that "it is something of an idiosyncrasy with Fry that he should so often finish great innings in this way"—that is, by losing the flight of the ball. We do not suppose for a minute that the poor man does it on purpose, but perhaps on some future occasion Fry, who writes about cricket almost as well as he plays it, will devote a page or two to the unravelling of the mystery that seems to enshroud Hazlitt's bowling. At present all that we can see from the Pavilion is that the ball beats the bat, and unfortunately for Hazlitt very often the wicket as well, but is evidently not a ball of that class which is purposely left alone.

As it happened, we were especially favoured by hearing the opinion of almost as high an authority as Fry on the subject of Emery's bowling, and the verdict was that on his best day the young Australian is possibly among the most difficult bowlers in the world, and might be better still if either he himself or his

captain had any idea how good he sometimes is.

"Where are you with a googly which comes quite as fast as any ball that Jack Hearne ever bowled? I hadn't the least idea what one ball he gave me was going to do. I had half made up my mind that it was going to come one way, and then it went so far the other that it fortunately missed the bat and everything else."

Probably Emery is not the stamp of bowler to be kept on long at a stretch, but as the possible dissolver of an obstinate partnership we should be inclined to put him in a street by himself. Carr's slow googlies seemed to try some of the Players pretty high at the Oval, but a fast googly is an altogether uncanny sort of a beast.

Then come into the reckoning Matthew and Minnett, the former in particular coming off on occasion with really startling figures, the latter quite a useful change bowler, and even thought good enough to commence the bowling in one or more of the Test Matches.

And last of all there is Macartney, not last perhaps on his merits as a bowler, but wisely kept in reserve as a man wanted to get runs rather than wickets. When he was allowed to do a bit of bowling, he bowled excellently well, and when he took the place of Whitty, after the latter had been no-balled at the Oval, the Surrey men did not seem to find that they had profited much by the exchange.

If the South Africans were far removed from being a hopelessly bad side as compared with many of those which are constantly seen playing first-class cricket, their chances of either winning a Test Match, or even putting up the shadow of a fight against England on a good wicket, were hopeless from the start. The presence of Halliwell behind the sticks, and a fast bowler of the Kotze stamp, might have made all the difference, and converted a moderate into a dangerous side, but only the courtesy of the Clerk of the Weather could have saved the team, constituted as it was, from crushing defeat in the Test Matches. We do not happen to know much about cricket as played on matting, but on the ordinary grass wicket it is futile to expect any side that has to rely upon one class of bowling only to win matches in the very best company. Moreover, more than one of the presumed cracks was past mark of mouth, and on the day that we label either horse or man "aged," it is recognised that he has left behind him his best years for active exercise. Even the Australian skipper, though still useful, is by no means so good as he once was, and the men who after a certain age retain their figure and activity to the same extent as Gregory has retained his, are few and far between. On their own dunghill—we beg its pardon, "matting" we meant—it is quite on the cards, for all we know to the contrary, that our

late visitors may be able to hold their own against our very best Eleven. Anyhow, they used to play old gooseberry with the combinations we sent out a few seasons back, and it may be added that we were hard put to it to get the better of them when, strengthened by the presence of Halliwell and a fast bowler, they paid us a return visit. But it is palpable that a good deal more variety of attack than was present to hand in the period between 1910 and 1912 is requisite to success on either Australian or English wickets. Pegler, of course, bowled marvellously well, and kept our very best batsmen in check, almost after the fashion of Alfred Shaw in his prime, and both Nourse and Faulkner worked like Trojans; but when it came to ringing the changes, lo and behold! there was no real change to ring. Pretty well every bowler on the side—and there were plenty of them—seemed to have understudied the same part or the same style. The fielding, if sound on the whole—they certainly did not drop catches quite as freely as the Australians,—was stamped with the impress of solidity rather than of sprightliness, and it was impossible to resist the impression that, with two or three exceptions, the side we saw playing in 1912 would have done better work earlier in the century. The batting may be said to have flattered only to be disappointing. There were plenty of men who proved their ability to make runs both in good form and at a good pace against our County bowlers, but in all but one of the Test Matches either luck or want of confidence in some cases, in others too much confidence, stood in the way of a long score. Faulkner, of whom great things were expected, after starting well struck a bad patch, and being out of luck, and consequently out of confidence, might have passed as a sound, though not particularly elegant, County batsman. Nourse played more than one thoroughly good innings, and several of the rank and file were useful on occasion. Among the younger players the pick of the basket was Taylor, who has a good many years' cricket in front of him, and of whom it may be confidently predicted that if time adds a little more freedom to his steadiness of defence, he will play a great part in South Africa, or, if any one prefers the term, Imperial cricket of the future.

Yet one thing remains to be added in favour of the South Africans — that whenever or wherever they played they were so obviously out to win, and played so cheery a game, that the people who paid to watch them may be presumed to have got good value for their money. And on this account their misfortunes appealed to our sympathy, no one grudged them their successes, and even when they lost a match they must have been conscious that they had won the goodwill of the gallery.

Not, however, so much the

constitution of the sides—be it said that for once in a way the English Selection Committee, barring only the omission twice over of a really fast bowler, were conspicuously happy in their choice—as the style and character of the play fell far short of expectation. Making every allowance for the weather, it is easy to supply an answer to 'The Daily Mail's' question, "Why is cricket losing its hold on the public?" Simply because it has become so deadly dull to watch, that the gallery does not get its money's worth. Neither do guests who have been invited to a wedding-feast have any particular desire to find themselves mixed up with a funeral in its stead; nor does the man who has taken a holiday and plumped down his railway fare and his shilling to see a cricket-match, care to look on at a game in which both sides are evidently "waiting upon" each other. There are bright spots on pretty well every horizon, but the temporary fits of cheeriness aroused by the bright batting of Hobbs, Spooner, and Woolley on the one side, and Macartney and Jennings on the other, merely served to bring into bolder relief the general dulness of the game of cricket as nowadays played in a Test Match. Ill weeds grow apace, and the Test Match type of cricket is no exception to the rule. Originally, as we think, introduced into English cricket grounds by Alec Bannerman, it was carefully watered and tended by Scotton and Shrewsbury, who transplanted it to Notts with such happy results that that County seldom lost a match, and he passed for a wandering lunatic who professed that he really enjoyed watching a game in which the Notts Eleven were playing. With the formal institution of a County Championship, and the absurd amount of importance attaching to the title, the growth of the weed progressed after an alarming fashion. Here and there a County or an individual fought hard against it. But the principle of so starting a game as *not to lose*, and to leave the chances of victory at the mercy of the Clerk of the Weather, had gained too strong a hold to be lightly uprooted. Time after time it was transhipped from England to Australia, only to return again, and its existence so far received official recognition in the Antipodes that unlimited time was allotted to its more perfect propagation. And in England our nursery gardeners became deeply interested in its culture, game-masters and professional teachers alike being at pains to impress two great truths on the minds of their pupils—that bowling to leg was immoral on the part of the bowler, and that on the part of the batsman it amounted to a criminal offence to let go the painter at a rising ball on the off. For a time there were gleams of hope resultant on a temporary clearing of the atmosphere. Grumbling that County matches too often resulted in drawn games, the revelation that the Australian team of 1909, quite

capable of holding their own with us in a completed game played on a good wicket, were our masters in the art of "sitting tight" when no particular advantage could be reaped by forcing the game to win, and a falling revenue, both a direct and an indirect result of tame cricket, had opened our eyes to the fact that cricket of the Test Match type was becoming too common to be remunerative. So in 1910 and 1911 we quickened up a bit, finished more of our matches, and even added a degree of sprightliness to the playing of County cricket. But then followed the visit to Australia, and the triumphal march of our all-conquering Eleven. Their victories were greeted with shrieks of triumph, and Hobbs and Rhodes, joint heroes of more than one lengthy first-wicket partnership, were lauded to the skies, a second Castor and Pollux, true saviours of the mother-country ashes. In the midst of the universal jubilation two questions were never asked. How long did those first-wicket partnerships last? How many hours did the compilation of our total scores occupy? One thing, if we knew, it was sound policy not to exploit — that the Australian spectators, who certainly by this time ought to be acquainted with every intricacy of Test Match cricket, found cause to grumble at the funereal pace of our scoring. And now the Australians may be said to have fairly paid us back in our own coin. For have they not sent us Kelleway? After watching that young gentleman's most typical display of Test Match cricket at Lords in June, we arrived at the conclusion that the millennium of cricket was only likely to come, or shall we see the true spirit of the game only likely to revive, with the advent of a full Eleven of Kelleways and the inevitable "busting of the slate." Our book of Arabian wisdom informs us that "when distress reaches its utmost, relief is close at hand." Is there any imaginable utmost in the cricket world beyond a whole regiment of Kelleways? And yet fair-play to that nerveless cricketer. He played the game according to all the recognised canons of Test Match cricket better than we have seen it played before, tiring the bowlers, boring the crowd, and staving off every possibility of defeat. It is quite easy to believe that, to borrow a paragraph from 'The Morning Post,' apropos of an innings played by him on another occasion, Kelleway made "no stroke that could have afforded him the slightest physical pleasure," but on the other hand the intellectual gratification of knowing that he was baffling the best-directed efforts of the enemy and killing time must have been immense. Our main complaint is that the laws of cricket, as they at present stand, should allow Kelleway or any other man thus to block the game, and, as we happen to think, to ignore and spoil the spirit of it.

A dull and tame form of

cricket, an indirect result of the playing of Test Matches, then, is our solution of 'The Daily Mail' problem. And—with all due deference to Lord Harris—we shall venture to assert that the diminished and diminishing value of the spending power of a shilling has nothing whatever to do with the waning popularity of cricket. For every one man forty years ago in the palmy days of cricket—the period indeed when Lord Harris and his contemporaries were in their prime, and were playing that bright and exhilarating game which we seldom see in first class matches to-day—there are at the least a dozen men who are spending money either to watch ball-games or to play ball-games to-day. The golf course absorbs—shall we say?—a third part of the dozen, and we really cannot find much fault with a man for preferring to play one sort of walking game rather than to watch another. And of what we will call the watchers' money, quite two-thirds have been diverted to the football field. Absolutely denying the statement which appeared in some paper that the League Football Match is *essentially* a spectacular game—for the essence of a game lies in the playing, not in the watching,—we admit that it is *accidentally* far more so than cricket. And for these reasons. In the first place, the shilling or sixpence paid in gate-money at once entitles and enables a man to see the whole and not a mere fraction of a game within a limited space of time, and the spectator knows that if no definite result has been reached when time is called, the time is likely to be extended.

In the second place, there is the knowledge that, slippery and generally uncomfortable as the ground may be found by the players, no consideration either of ground, light, or weather will, except under very extreme circumstances, be allowed to interfere with the playing of the game.

In the third place, it is absolutely impossible for any individual player so to block and hamper the progress of the game as to deprive it of all interest.

Fourthly comes the comparative absence of intervals, combined with the fact that the one necessary interval is not on a football ground, as the constantly recurring intervals are in the cricket field, subtracted from the presumed hours of play.

Apropos of this last-named reason, we cannot refrain from quoting two paragraphs culled from the daily papers in July.

Referring to the Gentlemen and Players match at the Oval, the first of these paragraphs runs thus: "There was another great company to see the cricket, but the spectators had not much compassion for the cricketers, and clamoured for their presence when the usual intervals were only slightly exceeded."

We do not for a minute desire to regard cricketers as so many white slaves. At the same time, may it not be fairly

said that in cricket merely played as a country-house game, a certain amount of laxity is admissible, that occasional lengthening or shortening of the "usual intervals" may be almost impossible to avoid, but that the general order of the day is, finish the match? On the instant, however, that cricket is elevated or degraded—take which you like—to the footing of a business transaction between the players and the public through the payment of gate-money, any prolongation of the "usual intervals," in addition to being a violation of the laws of cricket, involves a distinct breach of contract. Men who have paid their money to watch cricket, not intervals, may well be expected to clamour.

We wonder, too, whether the writer ever took the trouble to calculate how much time for intervals may be taken as being usually deducted from the twenty-two hours allotted to a three days' match. Something like eleven and a half hours at any rate in the match he was alluding to.

Here are our figures:—

	h.	m.
Three luncheon intervals	2	15
Three tea do.		45
Three actual starts never less than 5 minutes late .		15
Three intervals between innings . . .		45
Thirty-four batsmen at 4 minutes each . .	2	16
Three hundred and thirty-five overs at 1 minute each	5	35
	11	51

Is it then very wonderful, when we reflect that the whole time allotted to play is 22½ hours, if the paymaster sometimes waxes impatient?

Our second paragraph is of a more cheering order, even if it seems to come from the pen of a lover of the stagnant order of cricket. Dealing with the Eton and Harrow match, perhaps the brightest feature of a very depressing season, he writes: "There was something positively inhuman about the exuberant liveliness of the cricket. For the players had been hard at it since eleven o'clock," &c. It is consoling at least to feel that the Eton and Harrow boys are as yet "unfettered by any of those terrible thoughts that form the mental environment of the Imperial Tests." Long may they remain so! Like an oasis in the desert was the sight of a cricket-match played out to a finish by young players who never spared themselves for a minute in their wholesome determination to obtain a definite result. If Harrow lost, the honours of the fray were fairly well divided. Where by the common consent of every cricketer on the ground ultimate victory fell to the stronger side, the spirited fight set up by the Harrow boys after a disastrous start was better worth watching and more worthy to be called cricket than any one

of the whole series of Test Matches.

There remains the question whether the first class cricket of the future is to be watched by the connoisseurs only, who will appreciate the *finesse* of the game, or by the British public, ever keen to applaud a good stroke, a sharp run, or a fine piece of fielding, and quite ready to pay for the privilege of so doing? If by the former only, then it is a case of go-on-as-you-are. If, however, the presence of the latter is desired in order that the game may pay its way, then cricket of a payable quality—the quantity is all there—must be provided, and that can only be brought about by wise legislation. To expect cricket to compete with football as a spectacular game is wholly beside the mark, and to recall to the cricket ring the old-time crowds might prove to be as hard a task as to restore those lost legions of Varus. But at least some effort might be made to reinstate what we were once pleased to call a national game in something like its old place in the popular estimation, and to substitute a show of vivacity for the prevailing dulness.

But, it has been urged by the ultra-conservative party, if you once begin to tamper with the laws of cricket you will spoil the game. It is spoilt, we would reply, already. The true spirit of the game has gone; as played to-day it bears no resemblance whatever to the cricket of forty or fifty years ago. And the game played in that palmy period was the outcome of timely legislation. First round-arm and then overhand bowling had been introduced and authorised—things that would have been deemed heretical by our ancestors. Only one thing really requires to be provided against to-day—the interminable blocking of the game by the modern utilitarian player. Years ago we suggested one possible reform—so to limit the duration of an innings that the "blocker" would become an incubus on his side. And another alternative, long ago suggested in a letter to 'The Times' by an old and experienced cricketer, is this—let the umpire call "near" for every ball that passes within reach of the batsman, and if the batsman fails to touch it with his bat, let it score one run against him. Add to the wording of this rule "on the off-side" and to the penal clause that he who is ever "minus five" is *ipso facto* "out," and then perhaps we should get a bit forrarder.

In conclusion, is it any good to throw any more stones at poor old Lords, which may be described as closely resembling a chronic invalid, who on his best days feels perfectly well, on his worst is absolutely impossible? It is hard lines, we admit, on any ground to have to play two parts,—to be, that is, at once what may be called a national institution and a County ground. Heaven forfend, however, that Middlesex matches should be eliminated from the card—for Middlesex sometimes plays really bright

cricket. But inasmuch as the ground man at present seems to be required to provide match wickets for every day of the season, might it not be possible to relegate some of the M.C.C. minor matches to the practice ground, and allow the practice wickets for the nonce to be pitched in that comparatively little used far corner in the vicinity of the reporters' stand? Such fixtures as M.C.C. *v.* Dorset, &c., may be extremely interesting to the immediate supporters of the County engaged, but certainly do not draw such large crowds that reasonable accommodation may not be found in the region of the practice ground for the "gallery."

Also—for it is annoying to go to headquarters with the view of watching cricket, and then find oneself reduced either to playing with the pavilion cat, or studying the telegrams relating to play on other grounds,—if the turf in the centre of Lords is really in such a parlous condition as to be so often unfit for play, cannot some remedy be found? While the chronic invalid requires care and delicate management, there is in the case of Lords a lurking suspicion of a tendency in the direction of hypochondriacism. But the invalid, let alone the hypochondriac, is often found to reap benefit from a change of air and scene. Why then not periodically effect an interchange of turf between the centre and the outside edges of the ground? The outside edges may be warranted to have escaped that amount of extra attention on the part of the heavy roller which is reputed in past years to have wrought havoc with the turf in the centre, and the fielder on the boundary is not given to be so particular about either pitch or foothold as the batsman and the bowler. In May and June this year Lords suggested the idea of being an excellent site for a nursery of rose-trees. Unfortunately we happen to require it not for rose culture, but for cricket.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI.

THE second volume of Mr Monypenny's 'Life of Benjamin Disraeli' (London: John Murray) is of a deeper interest than the first. What it has lost in the high spirits of adventurous youth it has gained in a grave consistency of purpose. In 1837, in which year the book opens, Disraeli had sowed the wild oats of romance, and none knew more confidently than he that the seeds of a wanton extravagance were to bring forth a rich harvest of political achievement. He had gained by a brilliant and deliberate eccentricity the goal of social success. And henceforth, until the end of his life, his eyes were fixed firmly upon the House of Commons. As member for Maidstone, as the colleague of Mr Wyndham Lewis, he claimed and won a consideration which did not belong to the bold candidate still wavering between a reckless Radicalism and the philosophic Toryism of Bolingbroke. But though the years of romance were finished, Disraeli still cherished an inveterate habit of picturesque optimism. Though the battle was by no means over, he saw himself always in the centre of the field, an easy victor. The demon of doubt never whispered a paralysing syllable in his ear. His home-letters still burn with a fiery confidence. He is conscious that all eyes are upon him. He knows that he is singled out for particular favours. "The dinner to-day," says he, when as a member he is but a day old, "is merely a House dinner of 14 — all our great men with the exception of Lord Ramsay and myself, the only two new members. It has occasioned some jealousy and surprise." If it was Disraeli's first Parliament, it was Queen Victoria's first Parliament also, and to the general surprise there was a division on the Address. It took an hour, and Disraeli entered into it with all the zest of a novice. "I left the House at ten o'clock," thus he writes, "none of us having dined. The tumult and excitement great. I dined, or rather supped, at the Carlton with a large party off oysters, Guinness, and broiled bones, and got to bed at half-past twelve o'clock. Thus ended the most remarkable day hitherto of my life."

The enthusiasm is characteristic. He found every day remarkable, and the last the most remarkable of them all. He took up politics, as he took up society, with a light heart and an iron hand, and his triumph was ensured. It was not the least of his good fortune that his maiden speech, delivered on December 7, 1837, should have been received with an unparalleled demonstration

of hostility. The occasion long ago claimed the place in history which it will never surrender. It was an Irish debate, and Disraeli deliberately elected to follow O'Connell, his ancient enemy. "We shall meet again at Philippi"—this had been his challenge, and at Philippi they stood face to face. He attacked his ancient enemy in the admirable phrases of which he was master. O'Connell's speech was "a rhetorical medley." O'Connell's subscription was "a project of majestic mendicancy." If Disraeli's dandyism lost him the sympathy of many even in his own party, his spirited attack upon O'Connell roused a storm of fury among the Irish. "Hisses, groans, hoots, cat-calls, drumming with the feet, loud conversation, and imitation of animals," we are told, greeted every one of his sallies. Throughout it all he remained unperturbed. Not for one moment was his temper ruffled. Whenever there was an interlude of silence he spoke another period of his prepared speech in a cold, even, relentless voice. He twitted the noble Tityrus of the Treasury Bench and the learned Daphnis of Liskeard, and he painted a famous picture of Lord John Russell "from his pedestal of power wielding in one hand the keys of St Peter and waving with the other——" The sentence was never completed, but Disraeli was not slow to inform his friends that had he been allowed to proceed he would have put in the noble lord's other hand the cap of liberty. Thus, amid an unexampled uproar, he drew on to his memorable peroration: "I sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me."

Henceforth Disraeli's place in the House was assured. A respectable speech, delivered and heard in silence, might have been his undoing. The hostility of the Irish had assured him a brilliant effect. Henceforth he was familiar to every gossip in the kingdom as the man who had been shouted down and had not winced at the punishment. For a moment, it is true, even his own serener confidence was shaken, but for a moment only. A breath of encouragement speedily blew away the cobwebs of his doubt. Chandos congratulated him in the lobby. "I replied," writes he to his sister, "that I thought there was no cause for congratulations, and muttered 'Failure!' 'No such thing,' said Chandos; 'you are quite wrong. I have just seen Peel, and I said to him, "Now, tell me exactly what you think of D." Peel replied, "Some of my party are disappointed and talk of failure. I say *just the reverse.* He did all that he could do under the circumstances. I say anything but failure; he must make his way."'"

Where Peel led, the others followed. Lyndhurst made light of the bullying of the Radicals. He was sure that Disraeli "would have the courage to have at them again."

But the man whose eulogy most warmly gratified the orator was Shiel. "Now, gentlemen," said Shiel in Bulwer's hearing, "I have heard all you have to say, and, what is more, I heard this same speech of Mr Disraeli, and I tell you this: if ever the spirit of oratory was in a man, it is in that man. Nothing can prevent him being one of the first speakers in the House of Commons [great confusion]. Ay! I know something about that place, I think, and I tell you what besides, that if there had not been this interruption, Mr Disraeli might have made a failure. I don't call this a failure, it is a crush. My *début* was a failure, because I was heard, but my reception was supercilious, his malignant. A *début* should be dull. The House will not allow a man to be a wit and an orator unless they have the credit of finding it out." It was a generous appreciation, which led to a friendship and much good counsel. Shiel, a master of Parliamentary tactics, not only praised Disraeli, he advised him: "Get rid of your genius for a session," said he. . . . "Speak often, for you must not show yourself cowed, but speak shortly. . . . Quote figures, dates, calculations. And in a short time the House will sigh for the wit and eloquence which they all know are in you." Never was better advice given, nor more wisely received. The next time Disraeli spoke in the House he was careful to be dull.

Among the many reproaches hurled at Disraeli at the outset of his career was the charge of political inconsistency. He was denounced for a renegade on a hundred platforms. His early adventures in the cause of Radicalism were recalled to his mind with a pompous iteration. Yet Disraeli was more sternly consistent than any of his colleagues or rivals. He was from the beginning a disciple of Bolingbroke, and a disciple of Bolingbroke he remained unto the end. From the doctrine of Tory Democracy he never wavered. He was unalterable in his opposition to the Whiggish oligarchy. He fought the selfishness of the greedy middle-class with all the weapons of his forensic eloquence. "I look upon the Whigs as the anti-National party," he had said on the hustings at Taunton, and he repeated the phrase with variations again and again. In 1840 he assured Charles Attwood that he had worked for no other object and no other end than to aid the formation of a national party. "I entirely agree with you," he wrote, "that an union between the Conservative Party and the Radical masses offers the only means by which we can preserve the Empire." And the consistency of Disraeli came from no desire to entrench himself against attack. He was consistent, because before all things he was a political philosopher. For him the division bell was not the one and only excuse of statesmanship. He accepted the House of Commons, with its rules of procedure and its passion of

parties, as a convenient method of government. None more loyally than he respected its traditions and guarded its privileges. But he was a statesman of fixed principles, which he would if he could persuade the House to carry out. The last lines of 'Sybil' have been quoted many times. They cannot be quoted too often, for they contain in a small space the essence of the Disraelian doctrine. "That we may live to see England once more possess a free Monarchy, and a privileged and prosperous People, is my prayer; that these great consequences can only be brought about by the energy and devotion of our Youth is my persuasion. We live in an age when to be young and to be indifferent can be no longer synonymous. We must prepare for the coming hour. The claims of the Future are represented by suffering millions; and the Youth of a Nation are the trustees of Posterity."

With this faith emblazoned on his banner Disraeli went forth to fight. It inspired him not only in the battle of Young England but in his fierce contest with Peel. Each of these episodes, admirably described by Mr Monypenny, was a necessary step in Disraeli's progress. They won him the two things of which he stood urgently in need—Parliamentary fame and the support of the aristocracy. The good fortune which seldom deserts the adventurous spirit perched happily upon Disraeli's shoulder. The brief glory of Young England, if it attained no definite object, was Disraeli's first real triumph in the House. It strengthened his position; it crystallised his views. That he should have taken the lead of the generous spirits who had come down from Cambridge, eager to reform the world, was natural. Disraeli always professed a keen sympathy with men younger than himself. He had a profound belief in the efficacy of youth. Before Young England could claim to be a party, he was already on terms of intimacy with Lord John Manners and George Smythe, the apostles of the new gospel. "I find myself without effort the leader of a party," he wrote to his wife as early as March 1842, "chiefly of the youth and new members. Lord John Manners came to me about a motion which he wanted me to bring forward, and he would second it like Claud Hamilton. Henry Baillie the same about Afghanistan. I find my position changed." Nor was it strange that Lord John and Smythe should willingly seek the guidance of Disraeli. He was a man of ardour, equal with their own, and of far wider experience. A yet stronger bond between them was a community of thought and interest. The doctrine of Tory Democracy, which Disraeli expounded with so brilliant an effect, had been evolved by them at Eton and Cambridge, in complete independence and sincerity. And when, new to Parliament, they heard Disraeli pleading the cause of the People, they

hailed him with enthusiasm as the leader of their party.

Young England, as we discern it in retrospect, was a clear outcome of the Romantic Movement. Literary in its origin and inspiration, it made a valiant attempt to turn the light of imagination upon the dark places of politics. George Smythe and Lord John Manners, its only begetters, were poets by temperament, politicians by training and ambition. But above all they were true Romantics. For them the age of chivalry was not dead. The influences of their childhood and their youth were feudal and Byronic. To feudalism they were born; the lessons of Byronism they had learned at school and college, and had given to them the ampler interpretation of magnanimous youth. Moreover, they had read the Waverley Novels with passion, and rejoiced in the popular love of antiquities. They were fervent legitimists both; they still cherished the sentiment of the Jacobites; and Lord John Manners had proved in Spain a practical sympathy with the Carlists. A meeting with F. W. Faber at the Lakes had inclined them both to the doctrines of the High Church party, and they were near enough to the Oxford Movement, another offshoot of Romance, to fall beneath the spell of Newman. Clearly for them a Whig alliance was impossible. They came forward as the champions of the monarchy and the people. "O for an hour of George Canning!" exclaimed George Smythe on a famous occasion, and the admirers of Canning could not but be as hostile to Peel as to the Whigs themselves.

Mr Monypenny explains their political views with justice and lucidity. "They devised for the Church," says he, "a position of greater independence than the Erastian spirit of the eighteenth century had been willing to sanction, or that Peel himself, we may surmise, would have been disposed to concede. Like all true Romantics, they had an antipathy to the middle-class, which was Peel's political idol: they dreaded its growing influence, and hoped to provide a counterpoise by rewakening the sense of duty in the nobility and gentry, and restoring them to their rightful place as leaders and protectors of the people. With the people at large their sympathy was real and active. They had that faith in the lower orders which the Tory party had lost, and the courage to believe that it might be possible to redeem them from the misery and serfdom into which they had fallen. Their minds were fertile in ideas, some of them too picturesque, perhaps, to be practical, but all of them noble and disinterested, for bringing back joy to the sombre and monotonous lives of the labouring poor, and renewing the harmony between classes that had been one of the characteristics of the 'Merrie England' of the past." It was a lofty and a noble aspiration, and that Young England failed is the worst misfortune that

could have fallen upon the people. Unhappily democracy has taken the road of serfdom, and to-day we see a vision which would have pitifully distressed the champions of 1842, a vision of working men enslaved by their own leaders and by the mischievous men they have put in office—enslaved and with no other freedom than a vote.

Such were the views of Young England, and worthily were they advocated by the youthful heroes who composed the party. Of these, as we have said, the most conspicuous were Lord John Manners and George Smythe. Lord John was, as Mr Monypenny well says, "a man of a loyalty, purity, and kindliness of nature that almost amounted to genius." Other gifts were his also. He had a natural talent for politics, and grew with the years into a keen debater and a wise administrator. The advocacy of the people's cause was his peculiar contribution to Young England's stock of ideas. Disraeli drew him with a discerning hand as Lord Henry Sydney in 'Coningsby.' "An indefinite yet strong sympathy with the peasantry of the realm," he wrote, "had been one of the characteristic sensibilities of Lord Henry at Eton. Yet a schoolboy, he had busied himself with their pastimes and the details of their cottage economy. As he advanced in life the horizon of his views expanded with his intelligence and his experience; . . . and on the very threshold of his career he devoted his time and thought, labour and life, to one vast and noble purpose, the elevation of the condition of the great body of the people." Of keener intellect and of far less stable character than Lord John, George Smythe raised the highest hopes among his contemporaries. A man of ideas and of a quick originality, he might have won distinction in many fields. He has left behind him fragments of literature which may still be read with pleasure. It will give some measure of his charm and humour if we say that throughout his wayward life he retained unabated the affection of Lord John Manners, and that Disraeli owned he "was the only man who had never bored him." His friendship with his two closest colleagues lasted till the day of his death, and Disraeli painted his portrait more than once with candour and admiration. He sat for 'Coningsby,' and he is the Waldershare of 'Endymion'—"profligate but sentimental, unprincipled but romantic; the child of whim, and the slave of an imagination so freakish and deceptive that it was always impossible to foretell his course. He was alike capable of sacrificing all his feelings to worldly considerations, or of forfeiting the world for a visionary caprice."

Thus Disraeli, and perhaps it is by paradoxes that Smythe may best be described. His career itself was a paradox in which genius and failure are closely interwoven. Perhaps he loved life too well; perhaps he cared too little for life's wise

management to win what is called success. Certain it is that he failed brilliantly and completely. His failure does but set a keen edge upon the memory of his wit. There is often an element of dulness in success, if another paradox be permitted, and George Smythe was never dull. He passed through life like a brilliant butterfly, and if he left it with smirched wings, he lived always in the sunshine of a gay popularity.

Such were the men who were the first to serve under Disraeli's leadership. Their banner belonged to them all; the leadership was Disraeli's own. Others there were who stood or sat by their side—Cochrane and Baillie,—and at Deepdene they indulged their fancy as they would. The new party won an instant recognition. It was indeed the wonder of a season. It gave its name to a foolish newspaper; its praise or blame was on every tongue; and its importance for Disraeli was that it helped to accentuate his obvious divergence from official Toryism. For Young England Peel's autocratic temper could profess no sympathy. The generous aspirations of Manners and Smythe were unintelligible to his practical commonsense, and it is clear that he already regarded Disraeli as his bitterest enemy. "With respect to Young England," he wrote to Croker, "the puppets are moved by Disraeli, who is the ablest man among them: I consider him unprincipled and disappointed, and in despair he has tried the effect of bullying. I think with you they will return to the crib after prancing, capering, and snorting; but a crack or two of the whip well applied may hasten and ensure their return. Disraeli alone is mischievous, and with him I have no desire to keep terms. It were better for the party if he were driven into the ranks of our open enemies." This letter was written in 1843, and it proves that Peel was still groping in the dark. In three years he was destined himself to smash the party, and it was Disraeli, and no legitimate heir of his, who was called upon to reshape it.

The definite achievement of Young England was not great. It did not change the course of English politics; it did not sensibly improve the condition of the working-classes. It held meetings at Manchester and Bingley, which gave its members an opportunity of much eloquence. It did what it could to encourage Athenæums, as the homes of popular culture were called, and to further an excellent scheme of allotments. This is not much, it may be said; but Young England did far more than may be precisely measured. It gave a humaner tone to politics; it reminded the country that the condition of the people was not merely "a knife and fork question," that "you must cultivate the heart as well as seek to content the belly"; it insisted that the things of the mind were worth fighting for, and that the distinctions of class, eagerly culti-

vated by the Whigs, were no sound basis for society. The teaching of Disraeli and his noble-hearted friends has, alas! been long ago forgotten. To-day an appeal to anything but a knife and fork falls upon deaf ears, and if there is none to inaugurate another party of Young England, we are doomed indeed. But as there were then generous souls to speak, there were generous souls also to listen. Though the party was broken, a part at least of its work was done. Upon Disraeli and his career, as we have said, it had a conspicuous influence. It gave him a wise, foreseeing policy, and it placed him in direct opposition to Peel. And then it inspired 'Coningsby.'

There is no episode in Disraeli's life that has been more fiercely discussed than his relations with Peel, and it is only just that Mr Monypenny should have treated these relations at considerable length. At the outset Disraeli, like the rest of his generation, was disposed to welcome Peel as the hope and stay of the Tory party. He was delighted at Peel's approval, and smiled gaily in the light of his countenance. Great was his satisfaction when Wyndham Lewis declared that "Peel had taken him by the hand in a most marked manner." The applause of his leader was grateful in his ears and freely given. His maiden speech was encouraged by none more loyally than by Peel. "Sir Robert Peel," we are told, "who very rarely cheers any honourable gentleman, not even the most able and accomplished speaker of his own party, greeted Mr Disraeli's speech with a prodigality of applause which must have been very trying to the worthy baronet's lungs. . . . He repeatedly turned round his head, and looking the youthful orator in the face, cheered him in the most stentorian tones." Two years later Disraeli still took pleasure in the friendship of Peel. "I dined at Sir Robert's on Saturday," he wrote to his sister, "and came late, having mistaken the hour. I found some 25 gentlemen grubbing in solemn silence. I threw a shot over the table and set them going, and in time they became even noisy. Peel, I think, was quite pleased that I broke the awful stillness, as he talked to me a good deal, though we were far removed." Disraeli, of course, preserved his independence: he spoke and voted on occasion against his party, but with no more violence than was permitted to a young member of Parliament. All went well indeed until 1841, when Peel once more became Prime Minister, and Disraeli applied, as well he might, for the recognition which he thought due to him. The letter which he wrote to Peel was insistent and a trifle sentimental. "I confess to be unrecognised at this moment by you appears to me to be overwhelming, and I appeal to your own heart—to that justice and magnanimity which I feel are your characteristics—to save me from an intolerable humilia-

tion." The answer was what we should expect — cold and conclusive. "I trust," replied Peel, "that, when candidates for Parliamentary office calmly reflect on my position and the appointments I have made, they will understand how perfectly insufficient are the means at my disposal to meet the wishes that are conveyed to me by men whose co-operation I should be proud to have, and whose qualifications and pretensions for office I do not contest." Both wrote the letters that we should expect of them. The worst of it was that each was incapable of understanding the other. Peel, never a keen judge of men, put too low a value upon Disraeli's eminent ability. Disraeli, conscious of his power, was impatient at delay. In Peel's favour it may be said that Disraeli had been less than four years in Parliament, and that though he had proved himself a clear and courageous speaker, though he was already a master of political history and political tactics, he had not yet won the universal ear of the House. Applauded vigorously by a clique, he was looked upon askance by many on either side. Even three years later, as Mr Monypenny says, he was not generally accepted. He was still paying dearly for the means by which he had advanced. By a stroke of ill-luck, he seemed always an easy mark for slander. Many a foolish libel, now disproved and still believed, was circulated to his discredit. "Nor, in spite of all his gifts," Mr Monypenny tells, "had he yet acquired the authentic House of Commons manner. He had courage and originality, unbounded cleverness, and that most effective weapon — the power of sarcasm. But all these are gifts which require supreme tact for their judicious display in Parliament, and in Parliamentary tact he was at first a little wanting. . . . There was an element of pretentiousness and presumption in his speeches which the House of Commons resented. The oracular manner, which became a positive asset when he reached a high position, tended to delay his ascent. He was too didactic in tone, and his cleverness, though great, was too ostentatious." That is true enough, and had he been given office, the responsibility would doubtless have sobered his manner. He did not get office, and though it is not for us to regret an exclusion which gave us 'Coningsby' and 'Sybil,' it was clear that for him the political battle was to fight again.

Though Disraeli was disappointed of office, it is clear that his divergence from the Government was in no way inspired by injured vanity. It was Peel who changed throughout, not he. He was elected by his constituents to protect the landed interest, and faithfully he performed his trust. As early as 1843 he suspected any motion which meant "that they should fight against hostile tariffs with free imports," —a policy bound to end in

disaster. Valiantly did he come to the rescue of Mr Gladstone, "my right hon. friend, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade," by pleading for the happy medium, followed by practical men, the principle of reciprocity. Before his constituents he used the same language as he used in the House. "Shall I tell you," said he at Shrewsbury, speaking of the great Rebellion, "how it was that the nation returned to itself, and Old England after the deluge was seen rising above the waters? This was the reason—because during all that fearful revolution you never changed the tenure of your landed property. That, I think, gentlemen, proves my case; and if we have baffled a wit like Oliver Cromwell, let us not be staggered even before Mr Cobden." In the event, an alliance between Peel and Cobden proved too strong for the landed interest, but they who would suggest a malice in Disraeli's conflict with Peel overlook the plain facts of the case. A member of Parliament is not bound to change with his leaders, even though office be refused him.

Then followed the interval of Young England, and clearly Peel and his friends were stung to fury. Graham wished to drive Disraeli into open hostility—a hostility which, when it came, they endured with an ill grace. A letter of Peel's obviously exhibits the politician's point of view. "I am very glad," wrote Peel in December 1843, "that Mr Disraeli has asked for an office for his brother. It is a good thing when such a man puts his shabbiness on record. He asked me for office for himself, and I was not surprised that being refused he became independent and a patriot. But to ask favours after his conduct of last session is too bad. However, it is a bridle in his mouth." Alas, for Peel's peace of mind! It was not a bridle. It could not be a bridle, because Disraeli was resolved to put his principles into practice. The support of Young England, the writing of 'Sybil' and 'Coningsby,' had helped him to evolve the Tory Idea. Of this Idea henceforth he was the constant champion. He hoped, as we have said, to see England once more possess a free Monarchy and a privileged and prosperous People. He would have nothing to do with Arch-Mediocrities and Venetian Doges. He asked for faith in a political doctrine, and he heard on all sides nothing but the Opportunism of Peel. "The Tamworth Manifesto of 1835," he wrote, "was an attempt to construct a party without principles; its basis, therefore, was necessarily Latitudinarianism, and its inevitable consequence has been Political Infidelity." He fought the battle of the People and the landed gentry against the greedy encroachment of the Middle Class. He defeated Peel, and fell himself against the forces combined against him. He fell only for a moment, and at least a spark of his imaginative faith still

shines in the dusty air of politics.

The battle between Disraeli and Peel, which began in 1845, is unique in our annals. At first sight it seemed as though the combatants were ill-matched. Disraeli had never held office. The prestige of an ancient and successful Minister clung about Peel. He played upon the House of Commons "as upon an old fiddle." If he could not rise to the highest flights of oratory, he was a perfect master of the clear statement. In brief, "what he really was," as Disraeli said, "and what posterity will acknowledge him to have been, is the greatest Member of Parliament that ever lived." His worst failing, and it was bad indeed, was an impulsive variability. He "had a peculiarity," wrote his adversary, "which is perhaps natural with men of very great talents who have not the creative faculty: he had a dangerous sympathy with the creations of others." And having suddenly accepted the opinion or the plan of another, he attempted to force it forthwith upon all his supporters. Not to change at the same instant at which he changed, was in his eyes the blackest treachery. The example of Peel has been generally followed since his time. When Mr Gladstone's thumb pricked for the cause of Home Rule, every Radical thumb in Great Britain was expected to prick. And the witless docility of Members of Parliament is today fast bringing the House of Commons into disrepute. In 1845 independence was not yet an extinct virtue, and Disraeli opposed to Peel all the qualities which that Minister lacked. In the first place, he came forward as the champion of a principle. He had mastered the gospel which he meant to preach, and he wasted no words in vague exposition. He was as high in courage as he was firm in resolution. He was, moreover, an oratorical light-horseman whom few could resist. He understood perfectly the conduct of those dangerous weapons—irony and sarcasm. As a master of phrases which cut and slashed and left an unforgetable wound, he had no rival in his own day—he has had since. And when he faced Peel in single combat, there could hardly have been any doubt as to the issue.

In the first encounter Peel made a slip, for which he paid dearly. He was indiscreet enough in making a retort upon Disraeli to quote some lines by Canning, of whom his treatment was still remembered in the House. Disraeli was not one to lose his chance. "The right hon. gentleman," he said, "may be sure that such a quotation from such an authority will always tell. Some lines, for example, upon friendship, written by Mr Canning, and quoted by the right hon. gentleman! The theme, the poet, the speaker—what a felicitous combination!" The effect of this speech of Disraeli's was immediate. His First Philippic, as Mr

Monypenny calls it, gave him a far higher position in the House than any to which he had attained. "It would have made you cry with delight," wrote George Smythe to Mrs Disraeli, "to have heard the thunders of cheering." It seemed as though the battle was already won. Disraeli was pitiless and exultant. Night after night he assailed his foe with hard logic and brilliant satire. If only Peel had hit back, the contest would seem yet more splendid than it does. On the one hand, Disraeli gave no quarter; on the other, Peel hardly dared to resist. Mr Gladstone declared fifty years afterwards that Peel tried to answer only once, and then "failed utterly." That the victory was well deserved there can be no doubt. In dialectic, as in oratory, Disraeli proved himself easily Peel's superior. There is nothing that so easily loses its savour as Parliamentary speeches. Made for the moment, they rarely outlive the moment for which they are made. Nobody will ever again read a single speech of Peel's or Gladstone's. Disraeli's Philippics are as fresh as on the day of their delivery. They have taken their place, with certain orations by Demosthenes and Cicero, among the masterpieces of invective. So familiar are they to the most of us, that as we read them we seem to be turning over the pages of a book of elegant extracts. They contain phrases which are a permanent enrichment of our speech, which have passed into the heritage of our blood and state. "The right hon. gentleman caught the Whigs bathing and walked away with their clothes. He has left them in the full enjoyment of their liberal position, and he is himself a strict conservative of their garments." That gem sparkled in the first of the attacking speeches, and its radiance is still undimmed. The truth is that Disraeli was what is very rare among politicians, a man of letters. Born in a library, he had studied Voltaire while yet a boy, and though he had not the industry always to chasten his unwritten prose, a sense of literature did not desert him even on the hustings. In the speeches which he delivered against Peel, you cannot but be amazed at the conciseness of his phrase and the justice of his imagery. These are not the qualities, maybe, which ensured the instant triumph of his speeches. They are the qualities which have endowed those speeches with a lasting life and interest.

Meanwhile Peel was approaching nearer and nearer to that policy of Free Trade which his Cabinet was pledged to oppose, and Disraeli's invective never lacked an opportunity. "I remember the right hon. gentleman making his protection speeches," said Disraeli in a famous attack. "They were the best speeches I ever heard. It was a great thing to hear the right hon. gentleman say: 'I would rather be the leader of the gentlemen of England than possess the confidence of Sovereigns.' That

was a grand thing. We don't hear much of 'the gentlemen of England' now." And so he came to the peroration, which still seems to echo in our ears: "For myself, I care not what may be the result. Dissolve, if you please, the Parliament you have betrayed, and appeal to the people, who, I believe, mistrust you. For me there remains this at least—the opportunity of expressing thus publicly my belief that a Conservative Government is an organised hypocrisy." Nor are we likely to forget the expression of his contempt for the Minister who founds great measures upon small precedents: "He always traced the steam-engine back to the tea-kettle." And then his description of the Parliamentary Middleman, is it not superb?—"It is well known what a middleman is: he is a man who bamboozles one party and plunders the other, till, having obtained a position to which he is not entitled, he cries out, 'Let us have no party questions, but fixity of tenure.'"

When in 1845 Peel resigned, only to receive again the poisoned chalice, which Lord John Russell handed back to him, Disraeli had a still better ground for his attack, and found in Lord George Bentinck the staunchest of allies. Nothing but political trickery, the desire of hanging on to office at all hazards, could justify the step which Peel now took. Even he must have found it hard to convince himself that the failure of the potato crop in Ireland was a fair reason for throwing open the ports of England to foreign corn three years hence. It was Cobden whom Peel had caught bathing this time, and whose clothes he had stolen. Disraeli rose with the occasion, and the best of all his speeches were made in the fight of 1845-6. He poured the wealth of his scorn and ridicule upon "the political pedlars that bought their party in the cheapest market and sold us in the dearest." He avowed himself no enemy of Free Trade, but he explained again and again the futility of attempting to fight hostile tariffs with Free Imports. And then there was the magnificent passage about Popkins's plan. "And is England to be governed," he asked, "and is England to be convulsed by Popkins's plan? Will he go to the country with it? Will he go with it to that ancient and famous England that was once governed by statesmen—by Burleighs and by Walsinghams; by Bolingbrokes and by Walpoles; by a Chatham and a Canning,—will he go to it with this fantastic scheming of some presumptuous pedant?" Seldom has the artifice of contrast been more happily employed, and it is not strange that the sally was received with "peals of laughter from all parts of the House."

Nor can we pass over in silence the incident which, more than any other in his career, throws a shadow upon the character of Disraeli. Peel, stung beyond endurance, made the one effective reply of

the whole campaign. He asked how it was, if he were guilty of petty larcenies, that Disraeli was prepared to give him his support in 1841. "It is still more surprising," he added, "that he should have been ready, as I think he was, to unite his fortunes with mine in office, thus implying the strongest proof which any public man can give of confidence in the honour and integrity of a Minister of the Crown." Peel's retort was perfectly fair, and might have been fairly met. It would have been easy for Disraeli to point out that the Peel of 1846 was not the Peel of 1841, whom he had been prepared to support and to serve—that in the five elapsing years Peel had sacrificed all his cherished principles and had turned his back upon the declared policy of the Tory party. Unfortunately Disraeli did not do this. Instead, he was guilty of what will always seem the most discreditable utterance of his life. He denied that he had ever asked of Peel the smallest favour. "I never shall," said he,—"it is totally foreign to my nature—make an application for any place." Was it forgetfulness or falsehood? Even if we take it at its worst—as perhaps we are bound to do—it is a sin which most politicians would commit with a light heart. There is always an off-chance that an incriminating letter may be lost, and in the rough-and-tumble of politics, scruples, we fear, are never too finely edged. "Let the politician," says Mr Monypenny, "who is without sin in the matter of veracity cast the first stone."

Thus the battle had been fought with only one wrong blow on the part of Disraeli, and the discomfiture of Peel was complete. "They had trooped: all the men of metal and large-acred squires," into the lobby hostile to their leader. Peel was left, like Napoleon after Moscow, "without his army." Artistically, oratorically, morally, the victory remained with Disraeli. We say "morally," because we quite agree with Mr Monypenny that "there is not only a moral but an intellectual integrity, and in the intellectual virtue Peel was as much the inferior of Disraeli as in the moral he was his superior." We wish that Disraeli had not made a false declaration. We cannot acquit Peel of the charge that he betrayed the lifelong convictions of himself and his colleagues. However, with Peel's retirement the organised hypocrisy was swept away, and, as Mr Monypenny says, "from the moment Disraeli had succeeded in driving Peel from office, he never uttered another offensive word against him."

Mr Monypenny has discharged his task with profound knowledge and a balanced judgment. His grasp of politics, modern and ancient, enables him easily to unravel the threads of a complex situation. His growing and proper partiality for Disraeli does not darken his sense of justice nor impair his estimate

of Disraeli's adversaries. And this volume increases the favourable impression of Disraeli's character made by the first. The more that is discovered of the man and his career, the more readily are we convinced of his honour and integrity. Truly of him it may be said that to know all is to know how little there is to pardon. He has been blamed, for instance, by those whose interest it was to cover him with insult, that he married his wife mainly for her money. There is no more deeply interesting chapter in Mr Monypenny's book than that in which he allows Disraeli to tell the story of his courtship and marriage. Both husband and wife come out bravely from the ordeal of publicity; and if an honourable man has been relieved of reproach, the portrait of an admirably loyal and devoted woman is well and truly drawn. Mr Monypenny leaves Disraeli at the turning-point of his career. Fierce in opposition, supreme in invective, the coldest critic of another's conduct that Parliament has known since the Cornet of Horse, Disraeli is destined presently to exchange the free courage of a light-horseman for the responsibilities of leadership. And though the difficulty of Mr Monypenny's task increases with its progress, he will not fall, as he has not fallen, below his opportunity.

Since these pages were in type Mr Monypenny has been overtaken, to our great regret, by an untimely death. We prefer to leave the expression of our just hope for the future as it was written, and to record that the work we have read with so keen an appreciation is not merely an excellent piece of biography, but was achieved heroically, as the crowning effort of a full life, when its author was dogged and dispirited by ill-health.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD.

It is with the profoundest regret that we record the death of William Blackwood, for more than thirty years the editor of this Magazine. To contributors and readers alike his death brings with it a consciousness of personal loss. How great that loss is to friends and contributors can be measured by them alone. Yet so closely bound up were his character and energies with the Magazine, which was in effect a clear expression of his tastes and preferences, that he seemed familiar to many who had never been privileged to count him among their friends or even to exchange a word with him.

Born at Lucknow in 1836, the son of a soldier, and the grandson of the founder of the publishing house, William Blackwood was educated to fill his destined place. After a sojourn at the University of Edinburgh, he spent some years at the Sorbonne and at Heidelberg, and when, in 1857, he joined the house of Blackwood, he had some knowledge of three literatures. Five years later his partnership was announced in a characteristic letter written by John Blackwood to Mrs Oliphant. "Address your proof to Willie, here," he wrote. "I have made him a partner in the old House this week, and I hope he will keep the colours flying when his aged Uncle has grown unfit for work." In 1879 John Blackwood died, and thenceforth William Blackwood was head of the business and editor of the Magazine. How valiantly he "kept the colours flying" is within the knowledge of us all.

He came to the editorial chair in an inauspicious moment. A parliamentary compulsion to read and write had sensibly lowered the standard of literary appreciation. He was faced by the new and unforeseen competition of popular magazines which flattered the eye as well as beguiled the mind of their readers. In 1878 John Blackwood, in a retrospect, vaunted with perfect justice the supremacy of his Magazine. "The Magazine began in 1817," he wrote, "and has held its own at the head of the field ever since. Bulwer, Dickens, Thackeray, when at the highest wave of their popularity, all started or were employed to start periodicals, but they never touched 'Blackwood.'" To strive with rivals who aim at an equal height of achievement is an honourable enterprise. It is a less satisfaction to combat ad-

versaries of a lower ambition, and it is characteristic of William Blackwood that he made no concession to the shifting of popular taste. He upheld the dignified traditions of his house, he preserved unchanged the ancient policy, and it is the greatest of his triumphs that he leaves the Magazine as full of life and vigour as it was on the day when John Blackwood wrote his retrospect. Between the old and the new there is but one difference: while in John Blackwood's time all articles were anonymous, William Blackwood encouraged signing contributors. But he did not make this an occasion for trafficking in names. He did not pursue with feverish haste the idol of the moment, and it still remained the good fortune of the Magazine to make reputations, not to buy them ready-made.

The qualities of a good editor were innate in William Blackwood, and experience had vastly improved them. He was animated always by a consistent purpose. There is a continuity in the Magazine which you will hardly match in periodic literature. Alone of its kind, 'Blackwood' has always had a policy, guided in the path of uniformity by its skilful editor. From the principles of a sound Toryism William Blackwood never wavered. He was fierce in attack, as he was staunch in support, and he never countenanced a strange opinion or encouraged a wayward fad from a love of novelty or extravagance. And as his purpose was consistent, so it was sustained by an intellectual honesty and courage, which are rare in the world. He had no fear of speaking what he believed to be the truth. He was no lover of half measures and twisted counsels. It was not his ambition to print merely the soft answer or the amiable reproof. His policy, in brief, was a fighting policy; his intention, in which he never failed, was to see expressed in the pages of his Magazine the opinions upon life and letters which he believed to be just and right.

And he was a good editor, above all, because he understood better than any of his contemporaries the management of his staff. Where he found a contributor, he kept a friend. The relation of writer and editor is not always of the pleasantest. A lack of discipline on the one side, a hint of tyranny on the other, or, worse still, a reciprocal inhumanity, may make the position irksome, even untenable. We believe that none ever wrote an article for 'Blackwood' without willingly coming under the sway of its editor. There was never an unnecessary obtrusion of business. To write was an office of friendship, generously rewarded; an obligation was felt and acknowledged on

either side; the friendship remained firmly knit. In thus seeking a personal knowledge of his writers, William Blackwood was but following an honoured custom of his house. His uncle and predecessor eloquently explained his theory of publishing at the Scott Centenary Banquet. "Much was said," he declared, "of quarrels between authors and publishers, but he was happy to say that they were not within his knowledge; on the contrary, he could tell a very different tale. Authors had been his dearest friends and companions all the days of his life." These happy words might have been repeated with perfect truth by William Blackwood, and this truth helps us to understand the conspicuous success of his editorship.

Having made his contributors his friends, he put complete trust in them. He did not ask them to do that which did not fall within their scope. Though fertile in suggestion, he knew them to be the best judges of their own possibilities, and he always turned a ready ear to any project they might form. When he approved their work, he was most generous in appreciation. The letters which he wrote at the end of every month to his collaborators were masterpieces of their kind. He delighted to give his views concerning the current number and to invite the views of others. By this means he strengthened existing intimacies, and created a feeling of loyal co-operation which never died. And though, like the wise editor that he was, he refrained from writing himself, he saw with absolute clarity what kind of paper was suitable to his Magazine, he was a shrewd judge of literary worth, and he left his impress upon every number that was issued under his auspices.

This impress was various, like his mind. Though he entered the publishing house early in life, he was always a man of diverse interests. An intrepid sportsman, he rode to hounds for many years. He was passionately devoted to golf and cricket. A soldier's son, he had served in the Mid-Lothian Yeomanry Cavalry, and was a member of the Royal Company of Archers. Lucknow was his birthplace, and it was to India, where so many Blackwoods have found their career, that he turned always with enthusiasm. There is not one of these interests that was not conspicuous in his Magazine. The articles on sport have won the general admiration of sportsmen. No soldier need fear lest he should there find his affairs handled without sympathy and understanding. And surely there is no magazine that has painted more vividly the hardships and triumphs of Indian service than 'Blackwood,' and none that

has been rewarded by a wider enthusiasm in the East and in the dominions oversea.

For more than half a century William Blackwood's life had been spent among men of letters. He had counted among his friends George Eliot and Kinglake, Lever and the first Lord Lytton, Aytoun and Sir Theodore Martin the accomplished authors of 'Bon Gaultier,' Mrs Oliphant and Charles Reade, Laurence Oliphant and Anthony Trollope. Though he outlived many of his friends, his mind never lost its freshness, the keen edge of his sympathy was never dulled. The interest and curiosity of his mind were unabated to the end, and none who was fortunate enough to enjoy his companionship will forget his quick humour and genial appreciation. He was of those whom, even in ill-health, age does not touch, and we shall always remember with satisfaction that he died while yet in harness, and was not asked to put off in his lifetime the cherished burden of his duties. The success of his editorship, his keen sense of literary merit, his eager appreciation, his resolve to respect always the highest standard, — these are known to his friends and his readers alike. His friends alone are permitted to prize the memory of his loyalty, his sincerity, his warm affection, his scrupulous sense of honour in life, letters, and politics.

And as we look back upon his career, it seems as though the success which he achieved was due not merely to his own good qualities, but to his reverence for tradition. He was a member of no mean house—the house of Blackwood. He was alertly conscious of the example which his forefathers had set. By birth and training he was fitted for the work which he was called to perform. He spoke with the voice of those who had gone before. The spirit of his ancestors breathed within him. To us he was a cherished friend whose sympathy and converse we know not how to over-praise. To himself he may have appeared sometimes a chapter in the history of his house. There are some businesses which enjoy the rights and responsibilities of ancient lineage. Blackwood's is one of these. To a Blackwood a Blackwood always succeeds, and, as William Blackwood nobly maintained the heritage of the past, so it is in the assurance of a reverenced tradition that our sure hope of the future resides.

INDEX TO VOL. CXCII.

ABOR EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, WITH THE, 311.

Abors, the, description of the tribe of Indian hillmen known as, 311, 319 *et seq.*—former relations of the British Raj with, *ib.*—a friendly expedition treacherously murdered by, 312—punitive measures undertaken against, *ib.*—the march into the country of, 313 *et seq.*—ingenious defences constructed by, 316 *et seq.*—success of the force despatched against, 318.

ABU ZAIT CONSPIRACY, THE, 446.

Aeronauts, part likely to be played by, in real war, 647 *et seq.*—movements, disposition, and strength of armies ascertained by, 650 *et seq.*—bomb-throwing practised by, 656.

African hunting dogs, pursuit of a pack of, 34 *et seq.*—description of, 38, 43 *et seq.*—shooting of, 42, 46 *et seq.*

"——AND A PERLE IN THE MYDDES," 761.

André, Major, intimacy of, with the Shippen family at Philadelphia, 471 *et seq.*

Antiquarian research, importance of, undertaken by France in Egypt, 150 *et seq.*

Antrim, battle at, during Ulster rebellion, 542 *et seq.*—smuggling in the Glens of, 551 *et seq.*

Arnold, Benedict, ancestry of, 473—military exploits of, *ib. et seq.*—appointment of, as Military Governor of Philadelphia, 474—marriage of, to Peggy Shippen, 475—court-martial of, *ib.*—treasonable conduct of, 476 *et seq.*—British honours conferred on, 478—duel between, and the Earl of Lauderdale, 480—interview of, with Talleyrand, 481—family of, 483—death of, *ib.*

Arnold, Mrs Benedict: *see* Shippen, Peggy.

Asquith, Mr, utterances of, on Home Rule, 727 *et seq.*

ASQUITH, THE CONSTITUTION UNDER CROMWELL AND UNDER, 275.

Athletics, American practice of, 252, 255, 576 *et seq.*—asserted failure of, in England, 253 *et seq.*—the competitive spirit in, 255 *et seq.*

Australian Eleven, play of the, in test match cricket, 845 *et seq.*

Authorised Version of the Bible, ornate style of the, 407.

Babar, King of Delhi, romantic career of, 709 *et seq.*

BACKWYNDS OF THE BLUE RIDGE, 786.

Bannu, description of, 2—the inhabitants of, 3—the mission of Sir Herbert Edwardes to, 4—Dr Pennell medical missionary at, 5 *et seq.*

BANNU, DR PENNELL OF, 1.

Barker, Mr Granville, production of "The Winter's Tale" by, 691 *et seq.*

'Battle of Life, The,' by Mr Kebble, notice of, 581 *et seq.*

Beckford, William, finding of the MS. of the 'Episodes of Vathek' of, 699—origin of 'Vathek' by, 700 *et seq.*

Belfast, Sunday observance at, in the eighteenth century, 544—night watchmen of, 545—social life in, *ib.*—churches of, 546—illicit distilling in, 547 *et seq.*

BENEDICT ARNOLD, THE WIFE OF, 469.

Bible, Authorised Version of the, ornate style of, 407.

BLACKWOOD, WILLIAM, 875.

Blackwood, William, death of, 875—early training of, *ib.*—editorship of the Magazine assumed by, *ib.*—qualifications of, as editor, 876—diverse interests of, 877—literary friendships of, 878.

BLUE RIDGE, BACKWYNDS OF THE, 786.

Blue Ridge, the, description of, 786—stilling carried on at, 787—the inhabitants of, 788 *et seq.*, 793 *et seq.*—means of locomotion in, 791 *et seq.*—mineral resources of, 796

Bomb-throwing from aeroplanes, probable use of, in future wars, 656.
Bourbon, the Isle of, capture of, by the British, 63.
Braque, M., the post-impressionist pictures of, at the Grafton Gallery, 696 *et seq.*
British Columbia, probable future prosperity of, 722 *et seq.*
British Dominions, self-governing powers of the, 433.
British Empire, the retention of the, 438 *et seq.*
Brock, Major-General Isaac, early career of, 736—personality of, 737—troops at disposal of, for defence of Canada, 738 *et seq.*—the offensive assumed by, 742—surrender of Fort Detroit to, 743 *et seq.*—death of, at Queenstown Heights, 748—victory of the forces of, 749—monuments to the memory of, 750.
Browne, Sir Thomas, literary excellence of the 'Hydriotaphia' of, 408.
Burns, Robert, Cowper's estimate of the poems of, 261.
Bush Pirates, 34.
Campaine, Captain, piratical doings of, 614 *et seq.*
Canada, an Impressionist View of, 716.
Canada, How General Isaac Brock saved, 733.
Canadians, characteristics of, 717—division between English and French, 718, 724—management of municipal affairs by, 719—railway enterprise of, 721 *et seq.*—opposition of, to annexation by America, 724—contribution of, to Imperial defence, 725 *et seq.*—war declared against the, in 1812, by the United States, 738 *et seq.*—defence of the, under Major-General Brock, 742 *et seq.*
Canaries, the Lady of the, 160.
Cardinal College, Oxford, foundation of, by Cardinal Wolsey, 503.
China, breaking out of the Rebellion in, 413—a Republic set up in, 415—financial state of, *ib.*, 417—the new leaders in, 416 *et seq.*
China, the Truth about the Republic in, 413.
Churchill, Mr, letter to Sir George Ritchie by, 399 *et seq.*
Class legislation by the Radical Government, results of, 592 *et seq.*
Complete Elizabethan Gentleman, a, 51.
'Coningsby,' Disraeli's portraits of Lord John Manners and George Smythe in, 865.
Conspiracy, the Abu Zait, 446.
Constitution under Cromwell and under Asquith, the, 275.
Cowper, William, skill of, as a letter-writer, 257, 260—unfortunate environment of, 258 *et seq.*—simple life of, 260—familiarity of, with the best authors, 261—literary style of, 262.
Cricket of 1912, Test Match, 845.
Cricket, requirements in the game of, 255—the "spectator" the curse of, 256—test matches in, between England, Australia, and South Africa, 845 *et seq.*—increasing unpopularity of, 854 *et seq.*—"intervals" in the playing of, 856 *et seq.*—proposed alteration in the laws of, 858—condition of the ground at Lords for the playing of, *ib. et seq.*
Cromer, Lord, improvements effected by, in Egypt, 141 *et seq.*
Cure, In Quest of a: III., In the Midi, 344.
Deer, introduction of, into New Zealand, 191—sporting experiences in stalking of, *ib. et seq.*
Disraeli, Benjamin, maiden speech of, in the House of Commons, 860 *et seq.*—charge of political inconsistency against, 862—Young England party led by, 863—Peel's enmity towards, 866 *et seq.*—the Tory Idea evolved by, 869—the false declaration of, 873—marriage of, 874.
Dr Pennell of Bannu, 1.
Drama of Sophocles, a Satyric, 389.
Dudley, Sir Robert, Duke of Northumberland, early life of, 51—voyage of, to the Spanish Main, 54—legitimacy case of, 55 *et seq.*—bigamous marriage of, 57—service of the Grand Duke of Florence entered by, 58—the 'Secret of the Sea' written by, 59—scheme of, to secure his recall, 60 *et seq.*—death of, 62.
Education in Ireland, control of, by the priesthood, 157 *et seq.*
Edwardes, Sir Herbert, mission of, to Bannu, 4.
Egypt, improvements in the sanitary condition of the chief towns of, 140—police regulations in, 141 *et seq.*—the administration of, by Lord Kitchener, 144 *et seq.*—the position of France in, 150.
Egypt, the English in, 1901 and 1912, 140.
Egyptian papyri, recent additions to Greek literature obtained from, 389.
Electoral Reform Bill, the French, passing of, 567—results of, 568—working of, 569 *et seq.*—attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards, 574.
Elizabethan Gentleman, a Complete, 51.
'Endymion,' Disraeli's portrait of George Smythe in, 865.

England and Australia, test match between Elevens of, at Lords, 848 *et seq.*
English in Egypt, 1901 and 1912, the, 140.
'Episodes of Vathek, The,' by William Beckford, notice of, 699 *et seq.*
Eton *v.* Harrow cricket-match, the, 857.
Fife, the Duke of, funeral *cortége* of, in Egypt, 141.
Food-supplies of the United Kingdom, the, importation of, 435—protection of the trade-routes for, 440.
Football and cricket, comparison of, as spectacular games, 856.
Forgotten Battle, a: A Study in Obscure Naval History, 63.
France, the Isle of, capture of, by the British, 63 *et seq.*
France, results of the disendowment of the Church in, 132 *et seq.*—the position of, in Egypt, 150—Egyptian antiquarian researches undertaken by, *ib. et seq.*
Franchise bill, the new, one-sided character of, 292—abolition of plural voting by, 293—University representation swept away by, *ib.*
French Electoral Reform, the, 567.
From Sepoy to Subahdar, 201.
From the Outposts: A Foray, 638—Rammu, 751 — A Day's Training, 758.
Future, Imperialism in the, 431.
Geikie, Sir Archibald, fallacy dispelled by, as to the ancients' view of Nature, 410 *et seq.*
Gibbon, Edward, residence of, at Magdalen College, 512.
Glens of Antrim, the smugglers of the, 551 *et seq.*
Golf, playing of, in Scotland, 255.
Gordon, Arthur, Gordon's Hospital, Aberdeen, founded by, 245.
Gordon, James, parson of Rothiemay, literary tastes of, 235—assistance of, in the production of the 'Theatrum Scotiæ,' 249.
Gordon, John, "of Fechil," defeat of Covenanting cavalry by, 245.
Gordon, Robert, the ancestry of, 243 *et seq.*—early life of, 245—designation "of Straloch" assumed by, *ib.*—distinguished sons of, *ib.*—pacific counsels of, in the Covenanting struggles, 246 *et seq.*—commission from Charles I. to, 248—the 'Theatrum Scotiæ' drawn up by, 249—other literary productions of, *ib.*—classical attainments of, 250—death of, 251—summary of the career of, *ib.*
Gorst, Sir Eldon, public services of, in Egypt, 143 *et seq.*
Grafton Gallery, exhibition of post-impressionist pictures at the, 696 *et seq.*
"Great Straloch, the," 243.
Greek satyric drama, salient features of the, 389—description and translation of a newly-found Sophoclean, 390 *et seq.*
Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, terms of the, regarding the Panama Canal, 578 *et seq.*
'History of English Literature from Beowulf to Swinburne' by Andrew Lang, notice of, 426 *et seq.*
'History of English Prose Rhythm, A,' by George Saintsbury, notice of, 406 *et seq.*
'History of Scotland,' the, by Andrew Lang, labour expended on, 426.
Hocken and Hunken, Chaps. viii.-x., 81—xi.-xiii., 222—xiv.-xvii., 361—xviii.-xxi., 516—xxi. (*contd.*)-xxiii., 657—xxiv.-xxviii. (The End), 814.
Home Rule, Protestant opinions as to the effects of, 153, 291 — Roman Catholic reasons for desiring, 154—examination of the probable working of, 155 *et seq.*—opposition of Ulster to, 727—Mr Asquith's utterances on, *ib. et seq.* — Mr Lloyd George's speeches on, 729—Unionist speeches on, in the House of Commons, 730.
Hope, Major, victory of, in the Mid-Lothian election, 583 *et seq.*
How General Isaac Brock saved Canada, 733.
Hunken, Hocken and, Chaps. viii.-x., 81—xi.-xiii., 222—xiv.-xvii., 361—xviii.-xxi., 516—xxi. (*contd.*)-xxiii., 657—xxiv.-xxviii. (The End), 814.
Imperial Defence, the growing burden of, to Great Britain, 434—the Overseas Dominions' share of, 436 *et seq.*
Imperial Federation, the principle of, 441—future procedure in, 442—solution of the problem of, 443 *et seq.*
Imperial triangular contest in cricket of 1912, the, 845 *et seq.*
Imperialism in the Future, 431.
Imperialism, the new, 433, 441 *et seq.*
Impressionist View of Canada, an, 716.
Indian History, the Romance of, 705.
Industrial classes, present-day unrest of, 599 *et seq.*
In Memoriam: Andrew Lang, 425.
In Quest of a Cure: III., In the Midi, 344.
Irrigation in Egypt, progress of, under Lord Kitchener, 146 *et seq.*
Isle of France, capture of the, by the British, 63 *et seq.*
Johnston, Samuel, Cowper's attitude towards, 261.
Kitchener, Lord, the administration of Egypt by, 144 *et seq.*—report of, on Egyptian affairs, 147.

Lady of the Canaries, the, 160.
Land and the People, the, 418.
Land crusade, the Radical plan of a, 595 *et seq.*
Land tenure, official inquiry into systems of, 418—Socialist beliefs regarding, 419—Lord Lansdowne's proposals as to, *ib. et seq.*
Land Warfare, a Revolution in? 647.
Lang, Andrew, death of, 425—versatility of, *ib.*—the 'History of Scotland' by, 426 — the 'History of English Literature' by, *ib. et seq.*—characteristics of the writings of, 430.
Lang, Andrew: In Memoriam, 425.
Lansdowne, Lord, proposals of, regarding land tenure, 419 *et seq.*
Lauderdale, Earl of, duel between Benedict Arnold and, 480.
Leamcon, the Pirates of, 603.
'Letters of George Meredith,' Collected and Edited by his Son, notice of, 701 *et seq.*
'Letters of Robert Southey:' A Selection Edited by Maurice H. FitzGerald, notice of, 404 *et seq.*
'Letters of William Cowper, Chosen and Edited, with a Memoir and a few Notes,' by J. G. Fraser, notice of, 257 *et seq.*
Liberties of the people, Radical encroachments on the, 589 *et seq.*
'Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield,' by William Flavelle Monypenny, vol. ii., 1837-1846, notice of, 860 *et seq.*
'Life of Edward Mountagu, K.G., First Earl of Sandwich,' by F. R. Harris, notice of, 133 *et seq.*
Lloyd George, Mr, speech of, at Swansea, 130—abuse indulged in by, 131—disendowment of the Church in Wales by, 132—reproof of, by the Governor of the Bank of England, 288 *et seq.*—ill-success of the National Insurance Act of, 289 *et seq.*—scheme of, for transferring the land to the people, 294—speeches of, on Home Rule, 729—waning popularity of, 731.
London Docks strike, attitude of Mr M'Kenna in the, 290.
'Love of Nature, The, among the Romans,' by Sir Archibald Geikie, notice of, 410 *et seq.*
Lords, condition of the cricket-ground at, 857 *et seq.*
Madison, President, preparations of, for the seizure of Canada, 735 *et seq.*—declaration of war against Great Britain by, 741.
Magdalen College, 496.
Magdalen College, foundation of, 498 *et seq.*—building of, 500—the bell-tower of, 502—spread of the Reformed doctrines at, 503—outbreaks of plague at, 504—vandalism at, 505, 509—becomes a Popish seminary, 511—reforms at, 514.
Making of the Panama Canal, the, 263.
Manchu Dynasty, downfall of the, 413 *et seq.*
Manners, Lord John, the Young England party begun by, 864 *et seq.*—Disraeli's portrait of, in 'Coningsby,' 865.
Marathon race of 1908, American attack on Britain as to the, 576 *et seq.*
Matisse, M., the post-impressionist pictures of, at the Grafton Gallery, 695, 697.
M'Kenna, Mr, attitude of, in the London Docks strike, 290.
Meredith, George, literary style of the works of, 410 *et seq.*, 701—disappointed aims of, 702—dogged perseverance of, 703.
Mermaid Tavern, Tales of the: VI., The Burial of a Queen, Part I., 105—Part II., 213—VII., Flos Mercatorum, Part I., 557—Part II., 683—Part III., 809.
Mid-Lothian election, the, Major Hope's victory at, 583—importance of Major Hope's return at, 584.
Milton, the prose of, literary quality of, 408.
Moghuls, the Court of the, culture and civilisation of, 710 *et seq.*—fall of, 714.
Monypenny, W. F., author of the 'Life of Disraeli,' death of, 874.
Morgan, Dr H. A., Master of Jesus College, Cambridge, death of, 585—career of, *ib.*—character of, 586 *et seq.*
Morris, William, literary style of the prose of, 409.
Mountagu, Edward, K.G., early life of, 133—regiment raised by, for service under Cromwell, 134—Parliament entered by, *ib.*—appointment of, as Admiral of the Fleet, by Charles II., 136—death of, at the naval action of Solebay, 138.
Musings without Method: *July*, 127—*August*, 252 — *September*, 399 — *October*, 576 — *November*, 691—*December*, 860.
National Insurance Act, ill-success of the, 289 *et seq.*—powers of inspectors under the, 589 *et seq.*
Nature, the love of, among the Greeks and Romans, 410.
Nature, the Return to, 12.
Newton, Rev. John, results of the ministrations of, on Cowper, 258.

Obscure Naval History, a Forgotten Battle: A Study in, 63.
Old Ulster Memories, 541.
Olympic Games, the, spirit of professionalism in, 252 *et seq.*—wranglings and jealousies caused by, 254—celebration of, at Stockholm, 576.
Omar, the Policeman of Beyrout, 295.
Outhwaite, Mr, the gospel of theft proclaimed by, 583.
Outposts, from the: A Foray, 638—Rammu, 751—A Day's Training, 758.
Oxford, "millenary" of the city of, 496—history of, *ib.*—the colleges of, 497 *et seq.*—the siege of, 509.
Panama Canal, the Making of the, 263.
Panama Canal, the, early difficulties in the making of, 263 *et seq.*—the great dam of, 265—the locks of, *ib.*—housing of the workmen at, 267—obstacles yet to be overcome in the construction of, 269—the labour of excavation at, 270 *et seq.*—the two approaches of, 273—material used in the construction of, *ib. et seq.*—terms of the Bill as to, 579 *et seq.*
Panama Republic, the, army of, 267—natives of, 268—police of, *ib.*
Parliament Act of 1911, the, anomalies of, 276—powers of the House of Commons under, *ib. et seq.*—similarity between, and the resolutions of the House of Commons under Cromwell, 279 *et seq.*—difficulties as regards the abrogation of, 282—unworkableness of, 283 *et seq.*
Path to Reality, a, 727.
Peel, Sir Robert, enmity of, towards Disraeli, 866 *et seq.*—battle between Disraeli and, 870 *et seq.*—retirement of, 873.
Pennell, Dr Theodore Leighton, services of, as medical missionary at Bannu, 5 *et seq.*—school established by, 9—newspaper started by, 10—Government awards to, *ib.*—popularity of, with the natives, 11—death of, *ib.*
People, the Land and the, 418.
Picasso, M., the post-impressionist pictures of, at the Grafton Gallery, 696.
Pirates, Bush, 34.
Pirates of Leamcon, the, 603.
Pirates, the Irish settlement of, in the reign of James I., 604—character of the, 605—daring deeds of the, 606 *et seq.*—methods of dealing with the, 610 *et seq.*—some "customers" of the, 615.
Place, a Tight, 352.
Policeman of Beyrout, Omar, the, 295.
Political Situation, the, 288.
Post-Impressionists, exhibition of pictures by the, at the Grafton Gallery, 695 *et seq.*—art of the, 698.
Queenstown Heights, death of Major-General Brock at, 748—monument to Major-General Brock at, 750.
Reality, a Path to, 727.
Red Deer of Otago, Stalking the, 191.
Reform, the French Electoral, 567.
Return to Nature, the, 12.
Revolution in Land Warfare, a? 647.
Ritchie, Sir George, Mr Churchill's letter to, 399 *et seq.*
Riviera, the, residence in the pensions of, described, 344 *et seq.*
Romance of Indian History, the, 705.
Rome Rule, will Home Rule be? 153.
Routh, Dr Martin Joseph, connection of, with Magdalen College, 513.
Rural League, speech of Lord Lansdowne at the annual meeting of the, 419 *et seq.*
Saint, the Unfortunate, 485.
Saintsbury, Professor, defence of the art of prose by, 416 *et seq.*
Sandwich, First Earl of: *see* Mountagu, Edward, K.G.
Satyric Drama of Sophocles, a, 389.
'Secret of the Sea,' Sir Robert Dudley's great work entitled, 59.
Seetaram, a native soldier of the H.E.I.C., the autobiography of, 201 *et seq.*
Senator Smith, inquiry into the wreck of the *Titanic* under the presidency of, 128 *et seq.*—specimens of the oratory of, 129.
Shippen family, the, English branch of, 469 *et seq.*—American branch of, 471 *et seq.*
Shippen, Peggy, ancestry of, 469 *et seq.*—marriage of, to Benedict Arnold, 475—treatment of, after her husband's dishonour, 477—settlement of, in England, 478 *et seq.*—the children of, 483—death of, 484.
Shipwrecked, 322.
Single Chamber Constitution under Cromwell and under Asquith, parallels between, 280 *et seq.*
Situation, the Political, 288.
Slide, use of the, in the Blue Ridge mountains, as a means of travel, 791 *et seq.*
Small holdings, working of the system of, 420 *et seq.*—Tariff Reform a necessary adjunct to, 423 *et seq.*
Smythe, George, the Young England party begun by, 864 *et seq.*—Disraeli's portraits of, in 'Coningsby' and 'Endymion,' 865.

Snatty, 117.
Social reform, Unionist and Progressive policies of, 594 *et seq.*
Social Reform, What is? 589.
Solebay, the naval battle of, 138.
Soudan, reforms effected in the, by Sir Reginald Wingate, 147 *et seq.*
South African Eleven, play of the, in test match cricket, 852 *et seq.*
Southey, Robert, exalted opinion of his own writings by, 402 *et seq.*—work and character of, 404 *et seq.*
Stalk, Traquair's, 797.
Stalking the Red Deer of Otago, 191.
"Straloch, the Great," 243.
Subahdar, from Sepoy to, 201.
Swansea, Mr Lloyd George's speech at, 130.
Sweden, the Olympic Games in, 252 *et seq.*
Taft, Mr, conduct of, as regards the Panama Canal, 579 *et seq.*
Tales of the Mermaid Tavern: VI., The Burial of a Queen, Part I., 105—Part II., 213—VII., Flos Mercatorum, Part I., 557—Part II., 683—Part III., 809.
Tariff Reform, intimate connection of, with the system of small holdings, 423 *et seq.*
Tecumseh, Shawnee chief, help rendered to Great Britain by, in the Canadian war, 741.
Teedon, Samuel, unhappy influence of, on Cowper, 259.
Test Match Cricket of 1912, 845.
'Theatrum Scotiæ,' production of the, 249.
Tight Place, a, 352.
Titanic, wreck of the, Senator Smith's inquiry regarding, 128 *et seq.*
Tory Idea, the, evolved by Disraeli, 869.
Traquair's Stalk, 797.
Truth about the Republic in China, the, 413.
Ulster Memories, Old, 541.
Unfortunate Saint, the, 485.
'Vathek,' the origin of, 700 *et seq.*
War of Tariffs, the present-day, 601.
Waynflete, William of, Magdalen College founded by, 498 *et seq.*—death of, 501.
Welsh Church, the, disendowment of, 132—perplexity of the Government as to, 292.
What is Social Reform? 589.
'When Kings Rode to Delhi' by Gabrielle Festing, notice of, 707.
Wife of Benedict Arnold, the, 469.
Will Home Rule be Rome Rule? 153.
William Blackwood, 875.
Wilson, John ("Christopher North"), residence of, at Magdalen College, 514.
Wingate, Sir Reginald, reforms effected in the Soudan by, 147 *et seq.*
"Winter's Tale, The," production of, at the Savoy Theatre, 691 *et seq.*—mounting and dressing of, 694—acting of, *ib.*
With the Abor Expeditionary Force, 311.
Wolsey, Cardinal, connection of, with Magdalen College, 503—foundation of Cardinal College, Oxford, by, *ib.*
Young England party, the, Disraeli as leader of, 863—the begetters of, 864—the views of, *ib. et seq.*—the achievements of, 866.

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